



c  
29  
l5h  
780894

M. L.

REYNOLDS HISTORICAL  
GENEALOGY COLLECTION

ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY



3 1833 01149 2284







# How to Trace and Record Your Own Ancestry

By

Frank Allaben  
and  
Mabel Washburn

Foreword

The Lure of the Pedigree

9

Old Folk and Family Boxes

33

Treasures in Your Town Library

7

Field Research

7

Compiling Your Records

135

Is Your Consult a Professional?

143

Your Own Book: Preparation, Publishing

163

Conclusion

73



The National Historical Company  
175 Fifth Avenue, New York

[151] - 6

189



1780894

*Harold*  
**Table of Contents**

	PAGE
FOREWORD .....	7
THE LURE OF THE PEDIGREE .....	9
OLD FOLK AND FAMILY BIBLES .....	13
TREASURES IN YOUR TOWN LIBRARY .....	17
FIELD RESEARCH .....	23
COMPILING YOUR RECORDS .....	35
IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST .....	43
YOUR OWN BOOK: PREPARING AND PUBLISHING .....	63
COATS-OF-ARMS .....	73

book of which Frank Allaben would truly be the chief author—as he has been its “felic begetter”—as was said of the inspirer of Shakespeare’s Sonnets.

Frank Allaben is to be praised for whatever is of merit and worth in this book. Its faults, its lacks, are mine. Nevertheless, as a whole, I venture to hope that it may be useful. It is my deep wish that it may enable many to learn the enduring fascinations of genealogical work.

*Mabel Washburn.*



## Foreword



HE thought of writing this little book was born of the thousands of enquiries which have come to Frank Allaben and to me, on the subject of genealogy. He planned such a book, but his work, as President of The National Historical Society, and as Editor-in-Chief of *The Journal of American History* and *The Journal of American Genealogy*, necessarily absorbing much of his time, caused its completion to be deferred. When his earthly life ended, all of his literary material did not come to those who would have treasured it. Of his manuscript for the present volume, only some notes and the opening chapter (published in *The Journal of American Genealogy*), came to my care.

But Frank Allaben taught me all I know about genealogy. Together, during our happy work-fellowship of over twenty-one years, we had made researches, prepared and published many genealogies, discussed the subjects of the present book time-and-time-again. I had faith that I could present his point-of-view (which is my own), and that, from his notes and my memory, I should be enabled to write a book of which Frank Allaben would, truly, be the chief author,—as he has been its “onlie begetter”—as was said of the inspirer of Shakespeare’s Sonnets.

Frank Allaben is to be praised for whatever is of merit and worth in this book. Its faults, its lacks, are mine. Nevertheless, as a whole, I venture to hope that it may be useful. It is my deep wish that it may enable many to learn the enduring fascinations of genealogical work.

*Mabel Washburn.*



## The Lure of the Pedigree



HO was your grandfather, and whence did he come? Do you boast English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, French, Hollandish, or German descent, or are you typically "American"—a formidable mixture of them all?<sup>1</sup> Is the prevailing quality Puritan, Knickerbocker, Quaker, or Cavalier? Can you proudly say, "I am an American of the Americans?" In other words, did your forbears land on these shores prior to the Revolution? How many of them fought, bled, or earned bounty-rights in that struggle, so as to multiply the bars, S. R., or D. A. R., on your insignia? Are you eligible for the Colonial Dames, the Society of Colonial Wars, the Founders and Patriots, and a number of other organizations? Among your several hundred ancestors, on this side of the water at least, can you dig up one who had the grace to embark on the *Mayflower*? Or can you not lay hands upon some hereditary right to join the Society of the Cincinnati, which has been going begging in your branch of the family?

These are burning questions of the day. One who has given the subject no attention must be astonished to learn of the wide and growing interest in genealogy. North, South, East, and West the ferment works. Such leisure as we can snatch from the strife of business, our duties at home, and the pressure of social obligations, we now devote to investigation to discover who and what our forefathers were, and how illustrious the good name and heritage of glory they have left to us.

The only exception is the young man who has newly plunged into business.<sup>2</sup> To him indeed the genealogist is an anomaly, and the

<sup>1</sup> This chapter appeared, as an article, in *The Journal of American Genealogy*, Volume III, Number 1. Mr. Allaben had planned it as the opening chapter of a book on the subjects of genealogical research and the preparation and publication of family histories. His own ancestry comprised all the races he mentions here, although it was preponderantly English, with Norman-French background. His said, planned book has formed the basis, and, by far, the most important part, of the present volume. *Mabel Washburn*.

<sup>2</sup> Not always, for the War, with its tremendous impetus toward patriotism, thronged the great Genealogical Department of the New York Public Library with keen, bronzed young Army and Navy men, who had left their desks at America's call, *en route* to Europe, or returning from battle-fields, eager to learn what ancestral urge helped to deepen their own love of country. Since the War, many of my clients for genealogical research have been young, successful business-men. Mr. Allaben's delightful sense of humor gives, however, just the touch of delicate burlesque to the undeniably funny side of genealogical research. Called the Dean of American Genealogists, no one understood more thoroughly than he the serious, scientific side of the work, nor appreciated more enthusiastically the value of genealogical study as an influence for patriotism, and its necessity for the comprehension of history. *Mabel Washburn*.



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

latter's disease a mild form of insanity; for who can comprehend the mental kink that goes prying after forgotten ancestors when good coin of the realm can be grasped at? But the young business man gets married, and presently, after the honeymoon is forgotten and the flutter over the first baby is a thing of the past, Mrs. Business Man begins to frequent the libraries in search of her ancestors, at the same time making demands upon the family pocket-book, with a view to membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution or the Colonial Dames. It is a shock to her husband to find such an infection working in the bosom of his family. But the final stroke falls when the daughter of the house, Miss Business Man, fresh from High School or Vassar, squarely corners the terrified papa, demands his pedigree or his life, and pours out an avalanche of scorn and reproaches upon his deplorable ignorance and scandalous lack of patriotism and family pride. Now, at last, the poor, misguided man sees a light, and, if of a semi-literary turn of mind, may soon be discovered skulking into some genealogical alcove. In most cases, however, he trusts the case to a professional genealogist of reputation, and, in course of time, triumphantly places in his daughter's hand a type-written document, containing the family tree from the time of the Conqueror.

Moreover, he, himself, has been thoroughly inoculated by this time, and he receives without resentment or resistance the forceful suggestion of the ladies of the household that he forthwith join himself to the Sons of the Revolution, the Colonial Wars, the Mayflower Society, and the rest, like a gentleman of honorable family and respectable pretensions. At this stage, he can be found any evening at his club, beaming with a mild and becoming pride, as he avails himself of every chance to allude to this one of his ancestors, Judge This, or that one of his ancestors, Major That, as if the names and virtues of these newly-exhumed progenitors had been wrought into his consciousness with the earliest traditions of his childhood. In truth, it is doubtful if any other investment which a gentleman can make will repay him with so great and lasting a satisfaction as the expenditure necessary thoroughly to acquaint himself with the histories of his ancestors. And if he has had the work of investigation done well, and perpetuates it by spreading out the results upon the printed page,



## THE LURE OF THE PEDIGREE

he may pass away with the consolation that his remotest posterity will rise up to sound his praises.

It may be somewhat difficult to account for the tremendous impetus given to ancestry-searching in recent years. Doubtless the causes are complex, and some of them far-reaching. The genealogical table has been the foundation of class-distinctions and hereditary privileges from the dawn of history. Yet the desire to know whence we came, and the satisfaction in being able to claim honorable ancestors, are instinctive in us all, as apparent in republics as in monarchies, and never more dominant than amongst liberty-loving peoples.

The Germanic races are jealous of all that touches their freedom,<sup>1</sup> yet respond whole-heartedly to family and tribal bonds, and glory in the deeds of their forefathers. The Anglo-Saxon has come down through history, fighting for his liberty and boasting of his blood. Our Puritan ancestors crossed the seas for liberty of conscience, yet were most scrupulous in recognition of social rank based in part upon ancestry. Nor were our Revolutionary fathers, who fought for political liberty, irreverent toward the claims of a like social precedence.

The French Revolution, indeed, which made the confession of having had ancestors a crime which only the guillotine could expiate, brought in another view, which was exploited in this country by the extremists of ultra-Jeffersonianism. The present genealogical movement in America may be regarded as the pendulum's swing from such an extreme to the normal family-consciousness and race-pride of the Anglo-Saxon.

It would, of course, be easy to point to the immense influence of the patriotic societies,—some, like the Daughters of the American Revolution, embracing in their membership scores of thousands,—in accounting for the growing interest in our ancestors. But such an answer would be superficial. What has caused the birth and rapid growth of the patriotic societies, one after the other? This is the real question.

The true explanation, I believe, lies in the fact that we have reached the stage of reminiscence in our national history. The wilder-

<sup>1</sup> This Germanic love of freedom, corrupted by the irreligion of the Eighteenth Century (which, discarding the means of union between God and man, displaced God-given principles with the materialistic doctrine that might is right and the poor and weak must be ruled by the rich and powerful), was almost obliterated under the iron tyranny of the Hohenzollerns. God grant it may arise to guide the German people out of their boasted *kultur* into the glorious possibilities of lofty civilization which are their birth-right! *Mabel Washburn.*



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

nesses have been conquered, the work of the pioneer is done, we have triumphed, and been compacted into a nation, one of the greatest among the great. Every people that reaches the status of dignity and power delights to look back upon its formative era, where a glamour of romance transfigures all.

We, too, have begun to look backward. For many years the historian and the historical novelist have been calling us to recognize our own colonial period as a time of fateful travail-pains, whose great things were thus conceived, brought forth, nourished, and baptized in blood,—a day of romance, of giants and heroes. And, as our eyes have opened to this view, suddenly it has dawned upon us that this romance is actually history, and that the giants and heroes were our own flesh-and-blood ancestors. With this revelation breaking in, is it any wonder that we should turn to official files and muster-rolls to discover the particular exploits of our own ancestors, or that patriotic societies should spring up and bud and blossom like flowers in the tropics?



## Old Folk and Family Bibles



ELL about when you were a little girl!" "What did you do when you were a boy?" Questions like these are put to many fathers and mothers, or other grown-ups. Their answers often lead to reminiscences of earlier generations, and happy is the child who, thus, becomes familiar, in the years when thought and knowledge are being welded into habit and opinion and principle and ideal, with the personalities of his forbears.

He may hear of those shadowy ancestors, always clad, as we dream of them, in the armor of battle, who fought at Cressy or Agincourt, or, it may be, were with Duke William when, landing from the Norman ships (which, only a few years before, had been Viking ships), he stumbled, and fell prone on the shore of England that was to be his kingdom. His quicksilver thought instantly realized the omen of failure, which, as their murmurs of foreboding showed, the accident seemed to his followers. Swiftly digging his hands into the English earth, he scooped it up, sprang to his great height, and boldly cried: "Thus do I take seizin of England!" The soldiers shouted back their rekindled ardor, and the swift march began to the battlefield of Hastings and the victorious fight which gave to our English ancestors and to us the splendid heritage of Norse vigor, enriched with the civilization of France. This Norman culture, nurtured by Latin law, Latin science of government, and spiritually deepened by the Latin concept of our religion, became mingled with the Anglo-Saxon strength, and love of liberty. Fortunate are those Americans of the old stock who have and know their treasures of racial dowry from companions-in-arms of William the Conqueror.

Our grandfathers and grandmothers may tell us the stories, handed down to them for generations, of the dauntless men and women who left their homes overseas to dwell in the America that was a wilderness, and to carve from that wilderness a nation. They may tell us of their own grandfathers who stood staunch at Lexington, or fought in Southern swamps and woods, or hungered in the cold at Valley Forge.

How far more real and vivid will be the history-lessons of those



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

children who, in their homes, have thus learned the story of America and America's background across the ocean. An elderly lady had expressed, to the consternation of the present writer, her lack of interest in the subject of genealogy. On the ventured argument that knowledge of our own ancestors' part in historical events made the latter stand out more clearly to us, this lady, the widow of a hero in our war with Spain, pondered a moment, and then said: "I believe you are right, Miss Washburn. I recall one day, when the Admiral and I were at luncheon, our little grandson came in and, running up to his grandfather, cried eagerly, 'Oh, Grandpa, I learned all about you in school this morning!'" Certainly, to him, Santiago and Manila and San Juan Hill were never to be merely history read in a book, but a thrilling part of his own family chronicles, whose glory was his personal heritage.

The best way to learn all that your family can tell you of your ancestral past is to become a human question-mark. Start the subject at all times, convenient or otherwise, when the elder relatives are present. Ask a few leading questions, and, more often than not, the unravelling thus started, some gentle old lady or stately gentleman will pick up the strand, and, almost absentmindedly, go on unwinding the tangled threads of births, deaths, marriages, journeys and battles, romance and enterprise, heroism and comedy, that made up our ancestors' lives as they do our own.

Often, when questions are asked, old people will say they do not remember, and they do not, at the time. Drop that particular enquiry and go on to another, whose circumstances may be related to the first. After a while, go back to the earlier question, and, time and time again, you will find that memory has been lured back by the train of thought evoked by the second question, and the whole subject is now spread clear before you.

It is well to have by you paper and pencil; but do not be too business-like about taking notes. With some elderly people, this would be disconcerting, and probably it is better to defer your note-taking till the interview is at least suspended by other matters or conversation. Then, however, do not delay in the matter of writing down: the date and place of the interview; your name and residence (for identification in that future when your rough notes may be found and treasured by your descendants); the name and residence and relationship to you



## OLD FOLK AND FAMILY BIBLES

of the person interviewed; all the facts stated, together with your questions which brought them forth.

Sometimes you will learn of an old family Bible, perhaps kept treasured in a bureau-drawer, or in the big book-case, or packed away, and sometimes forgotten till your questioning recalls it, in the garret. People do forget that they have these grand old family Bibles, with ancestral records set down, in writing like steel-engraving, on the pages between the Old and New Testaments. Those who made the records must have put genealogy in the high place of importance which the subject was given in the Sacred Scriptures themselves (many chapters of the Bible containing family pedigrees), that thus they made their preservation sure,—as our manlier and more womanly (because more God-fearing and God-loving), grandsires and granddames believed,—by incorporating them in the Holy Book of God's Written Revelation.

Always copy *verbatim* the records in a family Bible. Take large paper and write distinctly. Copy also the complete title-page of the Bible. On another paper, write the date of your transcript, the name and address and relationship to you of the Bible's owner, and the complete history of its ownership, back so far as possible.

If you can, have photographs or photostats made of the title-page and the pages with family records. These should be made the same sizes as the originals.

Whether you make written or photographic copies, it is advisable to take them and the Bible itself to a notary-public, have him compare the copies with the originals, and then certify officially that your copies are correct. His statement of certification should also include your deposition as to details mentioned above, to be set down by you in making transcripts from family Bibles.

Much can be learned from old folk and family Bibles, and these sources of genealogical information should be consulted first of all when you plan to go a-hunting in the forests of your family trees. If you have not grown up in the atmosphere of talk and tales about your ancestors, seeing their stately old portraits on your walls and their quaint silhouettes in your cabinets, using their solid, but graceful-lined, furniture, treasuring their books, their laces, their jewels, to say nothing of their fragile tea-cups and their heavy iron kettles,—these conversational and Scriptural quests for family facts will open



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

up to you a new vista of interest in your relatives, and "gatherings of the clan." No longer will you dread the long dinners and dragging conversations of family festivals. Such events will have been endowed with the thrill of possible discoveries, the charm of fields full of posies to be gathered, the lure of hidden treasure to be dug for and brought out in triumph.



## Treasures in Your Town Library

FTER America entered the World War, the great Genealogical Department in the New York Public Library, guarded by its stone lions at Fifth Avenue and Forty-Second Street, was often thronged with Service men in uniform, who had come to our town *en route* to their victorious defence of American rights which had been insolently flouted by America's enemies. The writer asked one of these seekers after genealogical lore, a handsome young aviator of Austrian descent, just what had aroused his eagerness at that time to know more of his ancestry. He replied that his great-grandfather, of noble stock, had voluntarily left land and kinsfolk to seek "in the land of the free" that liberty and governmental respect for the rights of the individual which were lacking under Hapsburg rule. The scion of this idealist hoped, he said, that our forces would reach Austria before the War ended, and that he might, thus, have opportunity to seek there data on the ancestry which had produced such a man as his great-grandfather. Therefore, he sought to learn what he could here of his family line and environment, that he might be better prepared to go on with the research in Austria.

Not many libraries, of course, have the works on British and Continental genealogy, to be found in the New York Library; but many libraries in the United States now contain published family histories and books on the American localities where our ancestors lived. These latter often give more data on a family line than will be found in a printed genealogy.

If your library does not have such books, why not try to arouse interest in the subject in your community, and then present a request, endorsed with your and your neighbors' signatures, to the Directors of your library, that genealogies (perhaps on specific families residing in the place), and town and county histories (especially of localities in which you and your friends signing the petition are interested), be added to the library's collection?

When you go to a library to seek records of your pedigree, take with you plenty of paper of regulation size,—eight and a half inches



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

wide and eleven inches long. In taking records, use either full sheets, or, for brief records, half-sheets. You will find that, when you have accumulated an enormous mass of papers, having these of uniform size makes for convenience in filing them away and keeping them in order.

Speaking of filing your records, it is advised that you buy a box of Manilla folders, such as are used in offices for filing letters. If you get what is called "letter-size" folders, they will hold properly the paper-sheets of the dimensions named. One hundred folders cost about a dollar. You should have a box (of course, a regular office file-cabinet, or a separate file-cabinet drawer, is preferable, and single drawers may be bought for a few dollars from stationers), the box to be a little wider than the length of the folders and a little higher than their width. Keep the folders standing up, their openings at top, and write, on the extending margin which goes along one lengthwise side of the folders (filing so that this margin will face you as you file), the designating titles of the contents of the folders. These folder-titles should be written on the right-hand side of the margin.

For instance, you may accumulate many records of one ancestor. These should be kept in a folder inscribed, on the said margin, with his name. Sometimes you will gather records galore concerning a place of your family's residence. Put these in a folder designated something like this: Smith Family of Litchfield County, Connecticut. Another way would be to write the family's name on the right-hand side (as you face it in the file), of the extending margin, and, on the left-hand side of the margin, put the name of the locality. Folders should be filed in alphabetical order, from front to back.

Many libraries do not permit the use of ink, so take plenty of well-sharpened pencils, with rubbers on their tips. Take also to the library a box of clips (five cents a box, and a convenient kind is called "Gem"). These are useful in keeping together papers you write about one ancestor, or about one place of ancestral residence, or, perhaps about the brothers and sisters of each ancestor.

At the library, consult, first, the card-catalogue, to see if there are any books listed under the name of the family you wish to trace. Make a list, to keep, of such books, noting titles, authors, dates of publication, and library shelf-marks. Then, put these items also on the



## TREASURES IN YOUR TOWN LIBRARY

little slips which the library will furnish, and which you must fill out before asking the librarian to bring you the books.

Follow the same procedure with books on the localities where your ancestors lived, as, town histories, county histories, sometimes State histories. When you are further along in your work, you will find, too, that there are books on subjects or events which should be consulted. Some of these may be lists of Revolutionary soldiers and sailors of the State where your ancestors lived at the period of our War for Independence; or they may be works on a special class of immigration in the Colonial period to America,—such as the early Swiss and German settlers in Pennsylvania; or they may be church records, though these are usually catalogued under the names of places where the churches were.

Many libraries have the published official Archives of the States, or of some of them. If your ancestors lived in Pennsylvania, you will find a mass of records, filling many volumes, and in this material you will, almost certainly, find much relating to your line.

At the top, right-hand corner, of every sheet or half-sheet of paper you use, write, first of all, the name of the family on which you are working. Do this, even though you plan working on but one family. You may gather records of other families from which you also descend, through your ancestresses, and you will find it very confusing if you mix these records with those of the main line or lines which you are tracing.

Across the top, on *every* sheet or half-sheet of paper which you use, write the title of the book from which you are copying, the author's name, date of publication, volume, and page. If your copy extends to more than one sheet of paper (which may be used on both sides), repeat these items on the second and on every successive sheet of paper which you need for the special record you are then copying. On the second and successive sheets, however, write the word, Continued, or its abbreviation, Cont., after the items of the book's title, etc. Also, number such second and successive sheets. By following these two last suggestion, you will avoid the calamity of getting your records mixed, should one sheet be dropped, misplaced, or taken out for some use from its regular place in its special bunch of papers or its file.

From long experience, this writer knows too well that you will perhaps think these directions "finicky," and of small practical import-



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

tance. Probably you will—many of you who read this little book—ignore them. But, if you wish to make researches with the least confusion of mind, and to be able to assemble your facts, when found, most speedily and easily, you will make the rules for writing and repeating your full authorities as “the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not.”

Besides your strictly genealogical reading, of course, you should “soak yourself” in atmosphere of the periods and events of your ancestors’ lives and participation. If you think you had “Mayflower” ancestry, learn all you can of England in that period, and of the Pilgrims’ ideals, their way of living, their influence on later American history. If you are of Virginian, of Pennsylvanian, of “New Netherlander,” or any other early American stock, follow similar procedure.

Too much cannot be said of the necessity of making all that you copy absolutely *verbatim*. Begin and end what you write with quotation marks. Follow exactly the paragraphing, punctuation, capitalization, spelling. If, as often happens, matter, extraneous to your subject, appears in the part of the book which you are copying, you may leave this out, but put in its place a series of dots, thus: ..... This indicates omission, without break of quotation. Never omit words necessary for completion of sentences, however.

If you find, in the book, a serious error,—of fact, spelling, or what not,—copy it just as it appears, but follow it with the word, *Sic* (a Latin word, meaning thus or so), and your initials, word and initials enclosed in *brackets*,—not in parentheses. If you think the statement made in the book to be erroneous in fact, a brief explanation may be given, following the word, *Sic*, and preceding your initials, all within the brackets.

If an inner quotation occurs in what you are copying, use single quotation-marks for the said inner quotation.

Suppose you are consulting a genealogy on your family, and you find many records to copy: the method of copying is as follows. Put down, as a continuous quotation (if this account appears continuously in the book you are using), all the account given about one ancestor; and this continuous quotation may include the records of his children (except anything more than brief mention of the child who was your direct ancestor or ancestress), as they are described briefly in his own biography. Then, take another sheet of paper, and make a new, sepa-



## TREASURES IN YOUR TOWN LIBRARY

rate record for the account to be copied of the next ancestor or ances-tress in the line. Sometimes, it is true, one record may cover several sheets of paper; but, as a rule, one sheet or half-sheet will suffice. Never (and this writer would like to emphasize the word in what printers call Blackface Type, and make it "as black as Egypt's night"), under any circumstances, to save time, or paper, or for any other reason, copy two or more records on one sheet of paper. If you do, you will live to rue the day, when you come to the task of compiling your family lineage from the records you have copied. Even if what you wish to copy for one record occupies but a single line on your paper, let it have a half-sheet of paper to itself,—and remember to cite completely your authority for that tiny record.

In connection with citation of authorities, it should be said that, sometimes (as, for example, in a list of soldiers in a regiment), it is necessary to copy an explanatory heading, or chapter-title, before beginning the chief part of your quotation. The latter, in such case, may be prefaced by writing, directly after your citation of authority (book's title, author, date, volume, page, etc.): Under heading, Page       , "....." Give the page-number and put the said heading in quotation-marks.

In all genealogical research, work back from yourself, not down to yourself. If you attempt the latter course, you will have to trace every single descendant of the progenitor with whom you start, lest you skip the one who may have been your ancestor. Of course, if you already know your line, and have proof of it, and are only seeking confirmation, or additional records, this rule does not apply.



## Field Research



FIELD research means work in localities where lived the ancestors whose line is being traced, or in the localities where are preserved the records of their residence-places. For example, if your ancestors lived in Malden, Massachusetts, their probate records (wills, inventories of estates, etc.), would be found in the County Court House of Middlesex County, which is at East Cambridge. If your family resided in a small place in Berks County, Pennsylvania, you would have to visit the County Seat, which is Reading.

All States, however, do not follow the same method of keeping such documents. In some States, you would find all probate records, and also all records of deeds, in the County Seat at the County Court House, in different offices in the building. In Virginia, probate documents and deeds are to be found in the County Clerks' offices at the County Seats. In Connecticut, the State is divided into Judicial Districts, and the probate records of each District are kept in a special Town in that District. The District may overlap County boundaries, or a County may contain more than one Judicial District. Not only that! These Judicial Districts are arranged according to dates. If your ancestor's will was proved in 1725, it might be in an entirely different Judicial District than it would be if it had been proved a few years earlier or later.

The "Nutmeg State," as in so many other ways, has always been a law to herself as to keeping records. The Connecticut records are extensive, well-preserved, and usually yield fine genealogical results, but Connecticut research is complicated because of the State's system of keeping probate documents. In Connecticut, also, search for deeds of land takes much longer than does such work in States where the deeds of land in a County are always to be found at the County Seat in the Court House. In Connecticut, the deeds are in the Town Clerks' offices in the Towns (Townships), where the land conveyed was located, at the time the deeds were made.

"At the time the deeds were made!" If you have never made a field research, and your ancestors lived in a State where wills and



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

deeds are all kept at the County Seats, you may fancy that all is going to be plain sailing. But—for, in genealogical work, as in "*L'Aiglon's*" famous speech in Rostand's play, there is always a "but:" the boundaries of Counties changed many times during the Colonial and early State periods. In Virginia, where the present writer has done a great deal of field research, they sometimes seem to have changed every five minutes! [Which may be a slight exaggeration!]

The first thing to do in planning a field research is to get a clear and complete idea of "the lie of the land." If you do not know the County in which is now located the town or village of your ancestors' home, consult a United States Postal Guide at your Town Library or Post Office. This Guide lists places alphabetically, and mentions their Counties. In another part of the Postal Guide, under "States and Counties," you can learn the Seat of the County where, now, is located your ancestral residence. Next, go to the Library and read histories of this County, as well as of the place, itself, where your family lived. Thus, you will learn this County's date of formation, and from what earlier County or Counties it was taken off, and will also gather information as to the locality in which your ancestors actually lived. Read, then, histories of such earlier Counties, and learn similar facts about them. Finally, you will have traced the "pedigree" of your ancestors' residence back to one of the original Counties in which the Colony (from which the State came), was first divided,—provided that your ancestors lived, during the period of your research, in one Colony only.

Failure to carry out such a procedure is frequently why people find themselves "up against a stone-wall," when they learn, quite correctly, that no records of their families are on file in County Court Houses. If they made their researches at the Seats of the Counties *wherein were their ancestral homes at the periods in question*, they would probably find wills and deeds galore.

The present writer was informed by a client that enquiry made by him of officials in Russell County, Virginia, met with such a "stone-wall" result. When, however, the research on his lineage was undertaken properly, it was found that the "pedigree" of his family home ran thus: Russell County, formed, 1786, from Washington County; Washington, 1777, from Fincastle; Fincastle, 1772, from Botetourt; Botetourt, 1770, from Augusta; Augusta, 1745, from Orange; Orange,



#### FIELD RESEARCH

1734, from Spotsylvania; Spotsylvania, 1721, from Essex, King William, and King and Queen County. King William was formed from King and Queen County in 1702, and King and Queen County was taken from New Kent County in 1691, New Kent having been organized in 1654 from York, which was one of the eight original Counties formed when Virginia was divided into Counties in 1634. Essex, the other of the three Counties from which, as has been said, Spotsylvania County ("ancestor" of Russell County), was formed in 1721, was organized in 1692 from Rappahannock County. This last is now usually referred to as Old Rappahannock County, since it existed only from 1656 to 1692, while a modern Virginia County, also named Rappahannock, was organized in 1833. Old Rappahannock was formed in 1656 from Lancaster, and Lancaster, 1651, from Northumberland and York Counties. York, as has already been noted, was one of the eight original Virginia Counties. Northumberland County was the name given, 1645, to the old Indian District known as Chickacoun.

From this "ancestral line" of Russell County, Virginia, it will be seen that records in many parts of Virginia, from southwest to northeast, would have to be examined, if one were seeking to trace the lineage of a family living in what is *now* Russell County, during the long period, 1634-1786, during which the land which became Russell County was included, successively, in other Virginia Counties. The County Clerks' offices at the County Seats of all these "ancestors" of Russell County would have to be visited, if the family in question had lived in Virginia between 1634 and 1786; unless, of course, the progress of the work proved that the family had not lived continuously on land which became Russell County, but had settled there from a part of Virginia whose "pedigree" would make the Virginia localities to be searched different from those in the Russell County "pedigree" which has been given.

When you visit a record office to gather the documentary history of your ancestors, the first thing to do is to enquire where the indexes are kept, of the documents which you wish to examine in that particular office. If you are in the office of the Register of Wills for the County (called the Surrogate's office, in New York State), you will usually find separate indexes of Wills and Administration Letters. Sometimes what corresponds to the index of Administration Letters is called index of Intestate Estates. Then, there will be found an index of



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

Guardianship Papers, these called, in New York State, Orphans' Court Records. Sometimes, the indexes cover different periods, so you must notice the dates on the outside of the index volumes. There may be more than one volume for an index.

Having found the index volume, say, of Wills, which you should examine, take it to one of the writing-stands in the office. [With no desire to be discouraging, mention should be made, nevertheless, that, many times, the unfortunate worker will have to stand, for hours, while copying records.] Write, in the upper right-hand corner of your eight and a half by eleven inch sheet, the name of the family whose records you are seeking. In the upper left-hand corner of your paper, write the name of the County Seat where you then are; name of County; name of State; name of record office; name and designating number, or letter, or title, of the index volume which you are about to consult.

If the index you are then about to make for yourself covers more than one sheet of your paper, please remember the earnest exhortations which have been made to you in the preceding chapter of this book, as to copying, on every sheet of paper which you use, full and detailed citation of authorities. In field-work, the names of the places of your research, and of the record volumes there consulted, correspond to the names of printed books, their authors, dates, volumes, and pages, which, in the said chapter, "Treasures in Your Town Library," you have been urged to cite.

Indexes are differently arranged, some of them being more-or-less alphabetical, irrespective of the dates of the documents which they list. Other indexes are arranged according to dates, and these may be—usually are—alphabetical to some extent, within given periods. Few indexes in record offices are strictly alphabetical, either as to surnames or Christian names.

It is usually better to follow, in your index, the style of the index from which you are making your own. Put down every item which you find indexed of the surname of the family you seek to trace, even if the Christian names given for these surnames are not those of the lineage as you then know it. Be sure to include, in your index, all references to the surname (of course, copying Christian names too), for the whole period of your research. If the office index gives dates for the documents listed, copy these dates in your index. If the office



#### FIELD RESEARCH

index mentions character of documents (as Wills, Letters of Administration, Inventories of Estates, etc.), copy such information in your index. The office index will always mention volume and page (frequently called in public offices Liber and Folio), where the documents indexed are to be found, and you will, of course, copy these references in your index. To make all this clear, the following form may give you a general idea of how your index may look, when completed:

#### Guth Family

Lancaster, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.  
Registry of Wills. Index Volume, Wills, 1729-1790.

Guth, Heinrich, Will, 1745, Liber A, Folio 20  
Guth, John, Will, 1760, Liber B, Folio 8  
Guth, Martin, Will, 1764, Liber B, Folio 90  
Guth, Veronica, Will, 1788, Liber C, Folio 50

Of course, your index may include dozens of names, and the arrangement you follow may be quite different from the little example given, since the arrangement of the office index may be quite different.

Write your index carefully and clearly, and do not make your lines too close together. As already said, when describing library research, the time and energy saved, when you come to compile your records, by having taken them in a systematic and easily understood fashion, will compensate you a hundredfold for the time and care you have given to copying.

It is usually well, at the time when you enquire as to the location, in the record offices, of the index volumes, to ask where you will find the volumes containing the records, when you are ready to consult them, remembering to ask the locations of all the different record books which you may have occasion to consult in that particular office, as, Wills, Administrations, Guardianship Papers, and, perhaps, other Probate documents, pursuing the same course in offices of Recorders of Deeds, and in all record offices which you visit.

Having made your index, and learned the places in the office where are kept the volumes you wish to consult, get these volumes, yourself. Officials do not expect to wait on those consulting their records, though they are nearly always very courteous and kind in



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

giving information as to location of volumes, plans followed in the indexes (if these do not prove clear to you on examination), and in helping searchers to get down enormous tomes from shelves close to the ceiling.

There is no fee in American public offices for examination of records. The record offices usually open at nine in the morning and close at four in the afternoon. In smaller places, the Court House is frequently locked for about an hour at lunch-time, and visitors may not remain in the building during that period. The writer has often implored the officials in charge to permit her to be locked in with the records at noon-time, so that she might perhaps finish the work in that office and be able to go on to the next County Seat in her research, to work there the following day.

If you find, from the index you have made, that you have several records to copy from the same volume (and volumes may be designated by alphabetical letters, as in the little example of an index given above, or they may be designated by numbers) get down that volume from the shelf, and make copies of all the records in it, which you have in your index, before going to another volume, even though, in your index, several items may have been put down of records to be copied from other volumes, between your items which refer to records in the one volume.

In the left-hand margin of your index, put a check mark by your indexed item of the record which you are now going to read. The value of this is that, if you are interrupted in your work of copying that particular record, you can take up your copying, when the interruption is over, without a moment's loss of time in seeing on what document you had been engaged when the interruption came. After you have copied that special record, put the letter C after it, in the right-hand margin of your index. This plan will also prove useful, for (following the plan suggested of copying all records you need that are in one volume, while you have that volume down from the shelf), it will enable you to see at a glance just what records in your index have been copied.

In some cases, you will find that it is not necessary to copy the record which you have indexed. You may find, for instance, that it was incorrectly written in the office index, and that the name was really Jones, rather than Guth. In this case, you should examine the office



## FIELD RESEARCH

index for reference to that particular *Jones*, and see if the document, thus indexed under *Jones*, did not prove to be really one for *Guth*. Another occasional reason for not copying all documents which you have indexed may be that you will find, on reading them, that,—perhaps from their dates being far too late,—they could not possibly apply to the ancestral line on which you are working. After reading a document very carefully, if you decide that it need not be copied, write the letter R (to designate Read, instead of Copied), in the right-hand margin of the item in your index, instead of the letter C, which you would have written there if you had copied the document.

In copying a document in a record office, follow the same general plan as that described under this book's chapter, "Treasures in Your Town Library," being scrupulously careful to copy exactly, as to spelling, punctuation, capitalization, etc. This will be much harder than when you are copying from a printed book, for the clerks of our forefathers' days had a blithe *insouciance* concerning orthography, and their ideas as to punctuation and paragraphing would make them successful writers of *vers libre*, did they flourish in our modernistic era. Another thing to remember always: the spelling of surnames often varies, and to a wide extent. In the Colonial era of Pennsylvania, for example, many of the officials were of Scotch, or Scotch-Irish, antecedents, while the majority of the persons, whose documents they were called upon to record, often were of Swiss or Germanic origin. The result was that such clerks evidently put down names to be recorded as these sounded to their Celtic ears, and even sometimes began the names with the wrong initial letters.

When you have finished your work in the Registry of Wills, go to the office of the Recorder of Deeds, and follow the same mode of work as to making your indexes and copying the records. In the Deeds office, you will find, and always have to make, two indexes, one called Grantor index, and the other, Grantee index. The Grantor index will list items of conveyances of land under the names of persons conveying the land; while the Grantee index will list items under the names of persons to whom the land was conveyed. Since a person's Will is recorded but once, while that person may have been concerned in many land transactions, it follows that the office Deed indexes, and your Deed indexes, will be far longer than those in the Registry of Wills.



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

The office indexes of Deeds usually occupy several volumes, which you will have to consult in order to make your own indexes.

As a rule, records of Deeds are very long, and extremely tedious to copy. Of course, if you are copying a deed in which you know was concerned your ancestor, it is usually advisable to make a copy of the entire document. If you decide that the entire deed need not be copied, a good plan to follow is that described under "Treasures in Your Town Library," regarding the omission of material from your copy. If you have dozens of Deeds to copy, and most of these appear to be of small importance in your work, the following may serve as a general example of the way to make a brief abstract of an unimportant Deed.

### Brown Family

Chatham, Pittsylvania County, Virginia.  
County Clerk's Office. Deed Book 11, Page 75.

Grantor, Tarleton Brown, of Franklin County, Virginia, and "Nancy his wife."

Grantee, John G. Newbell, residence not given.

250 acres in Franklin County, Virginia, described as "being the Land whereon the said Brown now lives adjoining the Lands of the Representatives of Rich.<sup>d</sup> Carter dec.<sup>d</sup> the Lands that the said Brown purchased of the Legatees of James Bell deced: and the Lands of the widow Bell, Hancock, Iesse Chandler, formerly Fleming Spaldin's and .... Henry Smith"

Amount: Eight pounds, five shillings.

Witnesses: Daniel Brown, Daniel Brown, Jr., A. Street, Jr.

Deed made August 30, 1806.

Deed recorded September 1, 1806.

A number of years may elapse between the making and the recording of a Deed, even more than the period of a generation. Sometimes, deeds were made, but never recorded, and may be found to-day, tucked away in old farm-houses, whose occupants have lived on the land which their ancestors acquired, through these same deeds, perhaps, for more than a century, but whose legal title to the property might be endangered any day, by loss or destruction of the documents attesting their ownership.



## FIELD RESEARCH

Many people fail to realize the importance of Deeds in genealogical research. Therefore, in making abstracts of them, the greatest care should be taken to include the following items: all names; all dates; all descriptions of persons, as for example, their occupations, which are frequently mentioned in Deeds; all relationships stated in the documents; all references which throw any light on the ages of the persons mentioned, as, for instance, statements which indicate that the persons mentioned are of minor age; prices paid; sufficiently detailed description of the land conveyed to make it certain that the same land, if found described in another document, will be readily identified with that of the Deed which has been copied.

Deeds often prove links in an ancestral chain, more easily and more surely than do Wills. Several people, bearing the same name, and contemporaries, may leave Wills, and often it happens that such persons have had the habit,—most annoying to genealogists,—of choosing the same names for their wives and children. Sometimes, these persons are closely related, and their lands may adjoin, which makes description of such lands' boundaries similar. If, however, one studies carefully all Deeds relating to a said piece of land, taking down sufficiently detailed descriptions of the land, it is nearly always possible to identify positively a tract of land and, thus, to identify, or disassociate, the persons who have owned it. Unless extreme care is taken in copying Deeds, there will occur a thousand chances to confuse tracts of land, and hence their possessors.

Besides work at County offices, in field research, one should visit the State Capital, and consult general records of the State, such as Land Grants and military lists, and, it may be, at the State Library, a more extensive collection of printed histories of the various localities in the State, than would be found in a local library. Often, manuscript records to be consulted in the State Capitals will be found, partly, in the State Libraries. It is advisable to visit the State Library, always, and there one can easily learn at what offices in the State Capital may be found other general records which should be consulted.

In some States, the records of Land Grants are very important in genealogical research. When a man began the process of securing a Grant of Land from the Colony Government, he first made a formal application for it. These applications are not always to be found now, unfortunately. Sometimes they give the applicant's former residence;



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

sometimes the length of time of his actual dwelling on the land (perhaps then a wilderness in which a few settlers had built cabins, without any legal ownership of the ground); sometimes the depositions of neighbors who relate what they know of the applicant; and other like details which may throw light on the applicant's history. The next step in procedure was the issuance of Warrants to survey the land. These Warrants, as now preserved, often have the surveys themselves,—maps of the tracts. After the Warrant, came the Patent, or Grant, from the Colonial Government to the Warrantee. Of course, after our National Government was established, similar Grants were made by the several States. Sometimes, a Warrantee sold his rights, and, then, the Patent would be indexed under the name of the purchaser of such, provided the latter proceeded to take out the Patent.

The actual place where your ancestors lived should be visited, if possible; and endeavor made there to find and examine the records of the Church which they attended. Alas! Church records are almost always hard to find. One must sometimes go through a long process of red-tape, slowly to be unwound by diplomacy, to find these invaluable chronicles. More often than not, however, they seem to have disappeared "into thin air." It is most exasperating to learn, as one too often does, that the Church records were carried off by some former minister, or even by some former clerk of the Church, perhaps removed to another State, and at the period of your strenuous endeavor to search them, absolutely gone, "without a trace." The present writer hopes it may be set down as a tiny credit, that she has assiduously sought, whenever possible, to convince those in charge of our old Church records that they are human documents of immeasurable importance; that thousands of persons throughout the country have concern in their preservation, and in their accessibility; and that, if it be not possible to put them in print, they should be preserved as a treasure, preferably in the collection of some official, or historical, organization which has a fire-proof building.

In New England, there will be found, in the Town Clerks' offices of the various Towns, Town Records. These are mainly vital statistics: births, deaths, marriages,—of course, most useful in genealogical research. Then, there are Town Meeting records, chronicling the local governmental affairs. Some of these are a part of the Town Records, but sometimes are kept separately. It is often rather surprising to the



#### FIELD RESEARCH

genealogist, to find, interspersed with Minutes of Selectmen's gatherings, and notations as to the ear-marks of cattle belonging to residents of the place, a Will, a Deed, or, it may be, a neatly arranged "genealogy" of one generation, giving the names of parents, date of their marriage, names and baptismal dates of all the children.

The searcher after a pedigree, who is seeking documentary evidence, must remember that every State, and often every County, has its own sources, its own way of keeping them, its own method of indexing its records. In genealogical research, as in most other things, the only way to learn is by doing. Nearly every time that this writer undertakes a field research, she comes home, feeling that she has learned a great deal that is new to her, about the work, and wondering how, through all the years, she could possibly have made successful researches without having had the information she has just gained from her recent experience.



## Compiling Your Records



HERE are two methods of arranging the records obtained in library or field research, or in both, which have been tried and tested for many years by the present writer. Perhaps a combination of the two methods might be better for the amateur genealogist to follow.

Of course, if, during the research, you know that you have gathered material which proves a definite lineage, the compiling work will be much simplified. In such case, the procedure would be as follows.

Place together, without any regard to dates or subjects, all records which you have made concerning the earliest ancestor in the line which you have proved. Then, place in another pile, all your records about his children, except about his child who was your direct ancestor or ancestress in the following generation. If you have found material concerning his wife, put these papers together. Follow the same plan for your records relating to each successive generation in the line down.

Next, take up your first pile of papers which relate to your earliest ancestor in the line traced. Arrange these in chronological order from the ancestor's birth to his death, and, if you have records concerning it, the settlement of his estate. Sometimes, you may decide not to follow a strictly chronological order. It may seem better, for example, to put all his land transactions together; these, however, to be arranged in chronological order. In the same way, if your ancestor held many public offices (perhaps, if he were a Colonist of Massachusetts, having represented his town as a Deputy to the General Court, during many successive terms), all references to this service might, appropriately, be grouped together. If your ancestor lived in Virginia, you may have the same kind of records concerning his membership in the Assembly, as a Burgess. Your ancestor may have been a military man, and you will then, probably, wish to put together the account of his military career, in one part of your records.

This plan of compiling, as said, refers to the compilation of your records when you know that you have proved your line. Let us consider the more frequent case when, while you may believe you have traced



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

your line,—or even know this,—nevertheless, you will realize that you have gathered a great deal of material, the exact relationship of which to your particular lineage is not clear to you at this time. The method of compiling, in these cases, may be as follows.

If you have gathered material, either at the library, or in field research, which covers the family's residence in more than one locality, begin your work of compiling by placing all the records of the family in each locality in a pile. For example, you may have records of a family in Albemarle County, Virginia. You may also have made researches in Louisa County, whence Albemarle was formed, and thus have records of the family during the period when the land on which they lived was a part of Louisa County. In such case, you would put in one pile all the records which you obtained at Charlottesville, the Seat of Albemarle County, and in another pile all those obtained at Louisa, Seat of Louisa County. If some of your records have been gathered from printed sources, you would, in the same way, place those referring to Albemarle County with your documentary records of that County, and your printed Louisa County records in the pile of your Louisa County documentary records.

Having made your first division of papers, according to places, take up the pile of papers relating to the *latest* residence of the family. As has been said above, work, to trace a particular line, should always be made going back from yourself, not down to yourself.

Suppose, Albemarle County, Virginia, was the residence of your great-grandfather, and you are seeking to trace his pedigree back to the first ancestor in Virginia: you would take up your Albemarle County pile of papers, and without, at this time, seeking to be sure that you are not mixing identities, put together all your records concerning a man of one given name, as John, William, Henry. Take up your "John" pile. Arrange these papers chronologically. This will probably show you that some of the "John" papers refer to one man, others to a second John, and still others, perhaps, to other Johns. Thus, you will make, from your one "John" group of papers, several "John" groups. Do the same with the "William" and "Henry" papers, and so on with your other little piles, which have been put together according to first names of one surname in one locality.

Next, take up the records concerning the latest John, or William, or Henry,—whichever one of these is latest in point of time, and, so,



## COMPILING YOUR RECORDS

nearest to you in period. Arrange this man's records in chronological order. In many cases, you will find that you have quite a little history of this man. Write out this little history of this special John, or William, or Henry, following, in general, a chronological plan. For each statement which you make in your account of this man, lay aside the record from which you learned the fact which you have just written down. Continue to do thus until you have written out the complete history of the man, so far as your records can make it complete. Clip your written biography of this man on top of the records which you have used in compiling his biography, placing these records in the order in which the statements they prove appear, in your biography of him.

Follow this same procedure with all your other "John," "William," and "Henry" papers for this Albemarle County family. This work of biography may be done in pencil, as it is only preliminary.

In the course of this part of the work, you will, in almost every case, have noted that relationship existed among many, or all, of the persons whose biographies you have written. It may be that one John has been shown to be the son of an earlier John; that this John, Senior, was the brother of William; and that William, and John, Senior, were sons of Henry. Very carefully, take out from your various piles of papers, which you have clipped under your biographies, those records which prove such relationships, in order to insert them in their proper places. For instance, if the little pedigree just suggested was the one which you have proof was correct, you would add to your biography of the Henry who, you have found, was the father of William and John, the statement that he was their father; and you would then place the paper which proved this relationship in its proper place among the papers clipped under Henry's biography. In the same way, you would add to the biographies of William and John, Senior, the statements that they were sons of Henry. When you came to your biography, already made, of John, Junior, you would add to that the fact that he was the son of John, Senior. As you will, by then, have removed the papers from those which you had, before, clipped under these sons' biographies, and have placed them, instead, under the father's biography, you should, in the places from which you removed them, insert slips of paper, on which should be written the authorities noted on your copied records (citations of books or public documents, etc.), added to which should be written: "See record now clipped under biography of ——" (men-



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

tioning here the name of the ancestor to whose biography you have now clipped this particular record).

This plan of preliminary biographies, followed by their arrangement in little pedigrees, should be carried out, until you have included, so far as the records gathered permit, all the papers concerning the Albemarle County family in one pedigree. Almost always, however, you will find that you have some records which you cannot place definitely in the little Albemarle County pedigree of the family which you have made. These papers should be laid aside for the time being, anyway, and, on top of them, should be clipped a paper, thereon written, the name of the family, followed by "Albemarle County, Miscellaneous Records."

Carry out the same procedure with your Louisa County records, and continue to do this until you have arranged, in similar pedigrees, your records gathered in, or for, all the localities whose records you have searched. In most cases, you will have been able to add to your Albemarle County pedigree the family's earlier Louisa County history, and to have done likewise with the little pedigrees made from records gathered in the earlier Counties from which Louisa was, in the course of time, derived. You will thus, at the end, many times, have a long pedigree, beneath which you will have clipped all the records in order, which prove every link of the chain.

Now, take up your "Miscellaneous Records" of each locality, and see if you cannot now fit these into place in your long pedigree. If you can, add the facts which these papers prove to your pedigree, putting the papers, in their proper places, among the records clipped to the long pedigree as authorities. If you cannot prove that these "Miscellaneous Records" belong in your pedigree, omit them,—but preserve them, carefully. Future findings may disclose that they do belong to the history of the family you are tracing.

It is advisable, when possible, to work out your preliminary biographies and pedigrees for each County, as you go along, instead of waiting until the entire research is over, and then taking up what may, at that time, seem a gigantic criss-cross of tangled skeins, to be unraveled, and woven together in proper pattern,—a task which, then, would seem formidable.

You may not have been able, in every instance, to find, among your papers, absolute proof of the statement which you have wished to



## COMPILING YOUR RECORDS

make in your pedigree, but have found records which lend the weight of probability to such statements. In such cases, do not make positive statements as of proven fact, but use the words, "perhaps," "apparently," or "it is indicated that." If you think your records all but certainly do prove the point, the word "probably" may be used. In these cases, when you have not been able to find complete evidence, you should include in your preliminary biography, or in the biography which has been woven into a pedigree, a full discussion of *pros* and *cons* concerning it,—why you think it is nearly proven, or that it is possibly so,—being sure to clip the records, which lead you to make these assertions of probability or possibility, in their proper order among the papers which you will have clipped under your biography or pedigree.

The foregoing course having been followed carefully, the rest of the work of compiling will be very simple.

If you intend to make a pen-written history of the family, you should now get a better quality of white paper,—of the same size, eight and a half by eleven inches,—than that which you have been using to take your records. It is much better, of course, to typewrite your manuscript. If you use a typewriter, leave two spaces between the lines of your manuscript; and, in a pen-written manuscript, you should also leave space between the lines. Decide on the title for your manuscript, and write that in the middle of your first page, near the top. On each successive sheet of paper, put in the upper right-hand corner the page-number of your manuscript, together with the title, in full, or condensed. Write on one side only of the paper.

Your manuscript will be, practically, a copy of the pedigree which you have already made. In your manuscript, however, after each statement of fact, or of probability, or of possibility, write a number, a little above the line. Then, take your record which you have already clipped under your pedigree, as proving that special statement, and write on this record the same number as that which you have placed after the statement itself in your manuscript. For example, suppose the first statement, both in your pedigree and in your finished manuscript, is: "Ralph Lawrence first appeared in Virginia in the year 1662." You would place, after "1662," the figure, "1," and, as said, this should be placed a little above the line of your writing. [In your manuscript, do not enclose the figure in quotation-marks.] Your record-paper, which furnished you with the information that this was the date of Ralph



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

Lawrence's first appearance in Virginia, should be marked, "Note 1." Your next statement, likewise, would be followed by the figure, "2," and your authority for this second statement would be marked "Note 2." This process would be carried on till you had reached the end of your manuscript, and the end of the records used as authorities for the statements in your manuscript.

Very often, you will find that proof of a number of statements in your manuscript has been found in one record. In such cases, you would use the same note-number after these several statements in your manuscript. The record, which evidenced that Ralph Lawrence's first appearance in Virginia was in 1662, might also give you the fact that his grandson, Joseph Lawrence, lived on the same land which Ralph had received as a Grant from the Colonial Government of Virginia, soon after his arrival. Therefore, the figure, "1," would be used after the statement, in your manuscript, concerning Joseph's residence on this land, although this fact, perhaps, might appear far down in your manuscript, and after many other note-numbers had been used after such intervening statements in the manuscript, between what you had written of Ralph's coming to Virginia, and your statement as to Joseph's residence on the land.

It is a good plan to jot down, on a separate piece of paper, in pencil, your note-authorities, as you go along in the work of writing the manuscript. This sheet of paper should have at the top, in the centre, the word "Authorities." Suppose your first authority, which gave you the information about the date when Ralph Lawrence first appeared in Virginia, was a certain article in a volume of the Virginia Magazine of History and Biography. On your penciled sheet, headed, "Authorities," you would write, as your first paragraph:

1. The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, Volume—, [writing here the Volume's number and the year of its issue] Page—, [here, the page number], under article—, [writing here the name of the article] by— [writing here the author's name].

When your manuscript is completed, copy your rough list of Authorities, and add the page or pages, which this list will occupy, to your manuscript. Your manuscript is then complete.

What has been written about the preparation of your final manu-



## COMPILING YOUR RECORDS

script relates to cases where a single lineage has been traced,—that is, with a full account of one ancestor only, in each generation of the family treated, with a brief list of his brothers and sisters, appearing at the end of his father's biography. When your work has been undertaken to gather the history of all the descendants of one ancestor, rather than one single descent from that ancestor, the arrangement of your manuscript would be different from that described. The work of compiling, however, would be much the same, and, in general, the details which have been noted in the present chapter would be applicable to the more diffused task of compiling records on the many strands of descent from one common progenitor.

Of course, in gathering material for a regular genealogy, to be put in print, endeavor would be made to learn and record as much as possible of all descendants, whether or not these were in your own direct lineage.

In the chapter, entitled, "Your Own Book," will be described arrangements of genealogical manuscripts intended for publication.



## If You Consult a Professional Genealogist



HERE are genealogists and genealogists! When the present writer, many years ago, first had the thought that it might be possible to put to earning use, outside of the teaching profession, her love of history, inherited, devotedly cultivated through childhood, and in which she had specialized at college, she was so ignorant as to be unaware that professional genealogists existed! She fondly imagined that those who dedicated themselves to this work had love of their subject for sole motive, and that their researches were confined either to their own family trees, or to ancestry which it was necessary to know, in order to follow the ramifications of royal dynasties or great governing families in Old World lands. It was her great good fortune, at this time, to meet, and to be invited to work with, a distant kinsman, already the foremost genealogist of America. This was the chief author, and the sole inspirer of, the present book, Frank Allaben, to whose teaching and counsel and co-operation, the truly humble and deeply grateful co-author of this volume owes all of the success she has had in genealogical work,—as, also, she thus owes to him many other blessings.

She was right, however, in thinking that love of the work must be its basis. The genealogist who enters this profession solely with the thought of making it a bread-winner will assuredly fail, for such a person would never have the patience to persevere in the labor of research, which includes a very large proportion of brain-racking drudgery. Not only that: the commercially-minded genealogist would rarely be the kind of person who has an absorbed interest in history; and, without this, the genealogist, no matter how careful and painstaking, would be able to present only the dry bones of a family chronicle. The story of any family is full of color, picturesque incidents, historic backgrounds, drama,—comedy and tragedy and melodrama. Instances of this mingled warp and woof, which are to be found in the past of every



HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

family, shimmer through the drudgery of genealogical research, making the laborious task bright with color-patches of life.

In an almost illegible will, found in a dusty Court House, may be disclosed hints of a tragedy, sombre and fateful as those of the ancient Greeks. Old letters, faded and torn, may describe gay festivities of the olden times, in reading which we again breathe the perfume of our ancestresses' fans, flounce with them their brocaded draperies, and chuckle with them over their demure flirtations.

It is an error to suppose that all the romance of the past belongs to the overseas homes of our ancestors. American history is crammed full of thrill and romance. Almost any family whose forbears came to our country in the early period would, if it were thoroughly traced, form an exciting chronicle of the events of its period. One of the interesting things to do in these genealogical researches, which, it is hoped this little book may inspire, will be to find out "stories" in your own family history.

An instance of these side-lights in genealogical study occurs in the Blaney family. A descendant had always been told, from early childhood, about her great-great-grandfather, Captain Benjamin Blaney, who fought in the Revolution. The story, as she knew it, ran something like this.

Benjamin Blaney and his brother, a Captain also, but who served in the British army during our War for Independence, were supposed to have been sons of Lord Edward Blaney, Baron Monaghan, of Ireland, and to have brought with them to America, their family Coat-of-Arms, painted on wood, and charred, from its having passed through the Great Fire of London. Benjamin was said to have married before coming to America, and his wife, according to the legend handed down, was homesick, in the primitive Massachusetts which became her home, for the stately Blaney Castle, left behind in Ireland. To please his bride, Captain Blaney built a house in Malden, Massachusetts, and, within it, he made a secret room, because such a secret room had existed in his ancestral castle.

It is a pity that much of this lovely tale was formed of mist. The facts were that several generations of Captain Benjamin Blaney's ancestry had lived in Massachusetts before his time, the first of the line being a certain John Blaney, who came over in the 1670's, and who dwelt in Swampscott, rather than Malden. He could not have been a



IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

son of Lord Edward Blaney (a relationship immensely out-dated for his descendant, Benjamin); but it is among the probabilities that John was son of a younger son of this Baron Monaghan; for the family tradition of relationship to the Blaneys of Castle-Blaney, County Monaghan, Ireland, has the weight of many generations behind it. The story of the Coat-of-Arms appears to have been really true, for this was long passed down in the family here, as a treasured heirloom, until it was stolen from the grandmother of the descendant, to whom reference has been made; and it gave evidence of having been old, and of having passed through a fire.

The legend of the secret room in the Blaney house in Massachusetts is rather curiously, both true and false. This house was bought, rather than built, by Captain Benjamin Blaney in the 1740's; but it did contain a secret chamber, which, doubtless, had been put in as a refuge under Indian attack, by its builder, a member of the Dexter family.

Although it is necessary to discard so much of cherished traditions about the Blaney family, a more thrilling story concerning this same Captain Benjamin Blaney and his brother remained true.

Despite their fighting on opposing sides in the War of the Revolution (the brother who fought with the English having been an officer in that army before the outbreak of the War), the two Captains Blaney remained devoted brothers. One day, while Captain Benjamin Blaney was absent on service with the American army, his brother came in secret to Benjamin's home in Malden. For some reason, now forgotten, he had found himself at some distance from his own forces, had been pursued by American troopers, and had fled for refuge to his brother's nearby home. He assured Captain Benjamin's wife that his reason for being outside of the British camp was absolutely unconcerned with any military activities, or in any way inimical to the American cause. Therefore, though like her husband, Elizabeth Blaney was an ardent patriot, she felt free to yield to her natural feelings and to try to save the life of her imperilled kinsman.

She secreted him over night, divulging the fact of his presence only to a trusted old negro servant, and to the older Blaney children. The next morning, Mrs. Blaney bundled the children into the family carriage, and she and they started for the home of a relative at some distance away, and the route to which would take them very near the British lines. On the coachman's box sat a man, dressed in the gar-



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

ments of the negro servant, and he was to drive the coach. Needless to say, this man was Captain Blaney of the English army. They all knew the risk involved, for the countryside was full of American soldiers on the lookout for the English officer, but Elizabeth Blaney was a brave woman and a loyal sister.

After they had driven for some time, the carriage was stopped by a party of American soldiers, who told Mrs. Blaney that they were searching for an English officer, and had reason to believe that he had taken refuge somewhere in this very neighborhood. They questioned her sharply as to whether she had seen anything of him. Fortunately, they were not aware of the name of the man whom they sought. Mrs. Blaney listened to all they had to say, and then drew herself up very proudly, as if slightly offended by their persistent questioning, and by the fact that they were apparently contemplating prevention of the continuance of her journey. Possibly, her dignity was the more pronounced because she was a tiny woman, of fairy-like delicacy in appearance. "Sirs," she said coldly, "I am the wife of Captain Benjamin Blaney, of the American army. Be so good as to permit my carriage to pass!" The soldiers knew well the repute of her husband for gallantry and loyalty to his country's cause. They made way instantly. With an imperious gesture to her "coachman," she ordered him to drive on. It was not long before they reached a part of the countryside, where Blaney knew he would be near the British camp, and where it would be comparatively safe for him to leave the protection of the carriage. A hasty embrace, with fervent thanks, and he was on his way to the lines of his own army! One of the children, a little girl of perhaps twelve at the time, never forgot this episode. In years to come, she told it to her own little daughter, who was to be the grandmother of the present descendant, mentioned above.

So, if you are choosing a professional genealogist to undertake for you the difficult, though delightful, task of seeking your own ancestry, and gathering the records which will prove it, it is strongly advised that you select a person who understands the importance of historical knowledge in connection with any genealogical work; and who will seek, in the dust of old Court Houses, for the jewels of life which sparkled through the homespun of your ancestors' day-by-day existence. Genealogy is history brought down to the individual. You cannot possibly understand the whys and wherefores of your ancestors'



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

doings,—to say nothing of entering into the depths of their principles and ideals,—if you do not have a clear comprehension of the historical events and backgrounds of their times. The report of a genealogical research, made by one who has such historical knowledge, will be far more interesting, as well as more valuable, than if it were made in a cut-and-dried fashion, by one whose imagination could have no scope, for lack of such knowledge, and who, in consequence, could give you only a dry-as-dust account of the vital statistics of your forbears.

It goes without saying that you should choose a genealogist of practical experience, one who understands the technique of the work, and is familiar with the sources which should be examined for you.

Before a research is begun, the genealogist whom you employ, if he or she knows how, and intends to do your work thoroughly, will consider carefully, and submit to you, for decision, what will be the cost of the work. If your research involves visits to various localities, traveling and hotel expenses must be met. Sometimes, it will be advisable to gather for you officially transcribed and certified copies of especially important documents, and several dollars apiece may be charged for these by the public officials who will furnish them. Even if the research is made in a single library, thought should be given, in determining charges, to the time involved. One cannot do research in a hurry, and do it well. Sometimes, hundreds of books must be examined, with meticulous care,—these, often, without indexes, or with very incomplete ones. The results obtained must be pondered over, evidence weighed, and conclusions formed.

A genealogist's work is very similar to that of a lawyer, who is trying to prove title to a piece of land. If you believed that you had right to a valuable tract of land, or, perhaps, that you should share in an estate bequeathed by a millionaire, you would certainly place the matter in the hands of a first-class lawyer. At least as much carefulness should be exercised in your selection of a genealogist. Surely, the serious work of gathering for you the authentic chronicle of the men and women in your ancestral past, to whom you owe so great a part of your blessings (and to whom you assuredly owe the duty of finding and preserving the history of their achievements), is among the things that permanently count, even in this world, as of high importance.

The person, to whom you entrust this serious work, will, if he or



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

she is a person of honor, regard your history as sacred. Therefore, just as you would choose an attorney whom you believe to be honorable, as well as skilfull, and just as you would exercise the same precaution in selecting a physician, you should endeavor to place your genealogical work in the hands of one of whose character you are assured.

Of course, there are dishonest genealogists, just as there are dishonest people in all professions. It is to be regretted that the victims of these wretches so often dread the publicity which legal prosecution of such imposters would involve. The present writer has, however, known of but two really dishonest genealogists; but she has known of many well-meaning, but incompetent, ones. There is, however a considerable number of men and women in the United States, and in other countries as well, who do excellent genealogical work, with strict accuracy, and devotion to honor.

It sometimes happens that genealogical records, which may trace and authenticate an entire lineage, can be furnished for a nominal sum, or even without any cost. In the course of years, the two authors of this book have assembled data on thousands of families. There are cases where a pedigree, already worked out for one client, is found to be, also, in whole or in part, that of another. Where this occurs, it is usually necessary only to make a new type-written copy of the original report, or of that part of it which relates to the present case. A descendant of very interesting Virginia ancestry placed in this writer's hands the work of research on half a dozen of his families. Before the work was begun, the present writer stated to this gentleman that, from what he had told her of his lineages, she believed it probable that he also descended from a certain Captain Christopher Clark, a long descent from whom, accompanied by valuable documentary evidence gathered in many Virginia Counties, she had already proven in the past. She was very glad to offer to present a pedigree from Christopher Clark down to her present client, provided her surmise, that he was an ancestor of her client, proved correct in the course of the work now to be undertaken,—this pedigree, in such case, to be considered as "complimentary." Her surmise was correct, and this gentleman received a long and interesting history of his Clark ancestry (which gave him eligibility to membership in the Society of Colonial Wars), and this did not cost her client a penny, although the original Clark research had involved nearly a thousand dollars.



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

The costs of genealogical research differ widely. Some of the factors determining them are: extent and definiteness of the prospective client's present information on his ancestral line; scope and value of material in print on the family in question, and on the localities where the family lived in the period of the research; in the case of field research, the extent, condition, and accessibility of documentary records on file in the Counties which would be searched for the work.

In order to secure intelligent advice as to research, and an exact and economical estimate of its costs, the best plan is to send to the genealogist, whose services you contemplate asking, a little outline, arranged in generations, of your ancestry as you know it at that time. This outline should give, so fully as possible, the following items about your ancestors in each generation, going back from yourself to the earliest ancestor in that family of whom you are sure: names in full of ancestors and ancestresses; places of their birth, death, marriage, and general residence; dates referring to these, approximately, if you cannot give them exactly; facts or traditions as to military and civil service, and any other details which may bear on the biographies of your ancestors.

If you desire estimates on genealogical research covering more than one family in your ancestry, a separate outline, for each such additional family, similar to that just described, should be laid before the genealogist, each such additional outline to be written on a separate sheet of paper. The task of conscientious consideration as to the proper work on a family, together with that of making a careful estimate for the costs of the work, requires such a systematic setting forth of the facts, as has been here suggested.

In some of the States, official documentary records have been put in print, in our days; sometimes by the authorities (as County or Town), by learned societies, or by individuals. If your ancestors lived in such localities, and if, also, several reliable genealogies of your family have been published, the probabilities are that a library research would be sufficient to trace your lineage, or, at any rate, that the greater part of the work could be done from printed sources. Of course, then, the expense of research would be far less than if it were necessary for the genealogist to journey to another State or States, and perhaps visit a dozen Counties as well as the State Capital.

In every case, the best plan is to let the genealogist go over your



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

outlines and then tell you what seems advisable to be done as to your research, and exactly what the work would cost if you decided to authorize it. Despite the fact that some researches, in order to be done exhaustively, must involve very considerable expense, nevertheless, you may often be surprised at finding your genealogist's estimate so moderate a sum that you will decide you can easily afford such work on a number of your ancestral families.

As has been noted before, in this book, concern in genealogical research is far more extensive than might be supposed by persons who have not had opportunity to give the matter much attention. It is no longer a subject only for antiquarians, but has become of interest to the general public. This is indicated by the articles about genealogical research which appear, fairly frequently, in magazines and newspapers. It may possibly be of some interest, as illustrating this point, to note the following extracts, quoted herein by permission of the publishers or editors, and which bear on the endeavors of the present writer.

An article, published in *The American Magazine*, for November, 1923, not only resulted in the receipt, by the present writer, of an avalanche of correspondence—thousands of letters—from all parts of the country (much of this correspondence developing into contracts for research, here and abroad), but, even to the present time, genealogical problems are placed in her hands by persons who have chanced on old copies of this magazine, or who have saved the magazine all these nine years, with the thought that, some time, they would like to communicate with the subject of this said article. The author of the article was Mr. Milnes B. Levick, who had, shortly before the appearance of his article in *The American Magazine*, written something of the present writer's genealogical research work for the *New York Times*, with which newspaper he was then connected.

Mr. Levick's article is herein reproduced, by permission.

### “AN EXPERT IN TRACING FAMILY HISTORIES

“A rich Middle-Westerner, chatting with a new acquaintance who happened to be a genealogist,\* said, ‘Well, you couldn't trace my pedigree. My father was a Methodist minister, going from place to place, and all I know of my parents is their names, and the State where they

---

\* This was Frank Allaben. *Mabel Washburn.*



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

were married.' But the genealogist, on his mettle, took this slender clew. It led to many States, each with a different system of documentary sources. He worked on it, as occasion permitted, for years. Then he gave his challenger a thick book containing the complete family tree and, besides, documentary evidence embracing twenty families.

"With such material and opportunities, Miss Mabel Washburn has won a place among the most successful professional women of America.

"Genealogy to most people is dry as dust. To her it is an art, a science, and a passion.

"There is no reason,' she says, 'why a woman cannot make as high as eight or ten thousand dollars a year. The income is more a matter of chance than a lawyer's. Good business sense is needed, as well as skill and training and hard work. But often one has the satisfaction of contracts renewed from year to year.'

"As the physician and the lawyer penetrate the secrets of humankind, so does the genealogist, in tracing the story of generations.

"Here, for instance is a man whose one claim to note is his ancestry. Here is another who has worked up from poverty. At his order, the genealogist tracks names and dates of humble freemen through wills and deeds and birth records in old American county seats, or in archive offices abroad.

"Genealogy is not snobbish,' says Miss Washburn. 'It is the most democratic of studies. It shows that most of us, or at least those whose families came from small countries, like England, are descended from kings. And from serfs, too. We are all mixed. Look!'

"She showed the pedigree of one of America's richest financiers.

"See how it is connected here with some of England's highest families. Now, for several generations, it descends. It rises again; generations of knights, a long list of them. Then it falls.

"Remember, each person has four grandparents. With three generations to the century, in a thousand years you have hundreds of thousands of ancestors. They may include any class—both jailbirds and kings.'

"Abraham Lincoln is accounted of humble origin, but he came from the lesser gentry of County Norfolk, England. George Washington was descended from practically every mediaeval royal line. His forefathers included commonfolk, but also Magna Charta barons and,



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

besides them, Alfred the Great, St. Louis, and Charlemagne. He had the blood of governors of men.'

"At Miss Washburn's hand, in her genealogical workshop in New York, are books and manuscripts and replicas of documents with data on a hundred thousand families, including Washington's. She was the first to assemble and make accessible all the facts connected with Washington's first Virginia ancestor and his English lineage.

"Do I get more women clients or men?" She laughed. "That's the question I hear oftenest of all. It's about half and half. But take all sorts, and you'll find they want the truth. The average man client has a broader interest in genealogy. Most of the women want credentials for joining a society of descent, such as the Daughters of the American Revolution. The society climber isn't frequent enough to count.

"Research is expensive." One woman wrote: "Please send me my complete pedigree; I enclose a two cent stamp." Another cheerfully paid five hundred dollars to make sure I was right when I told her a certain clue would produce nothing. A third, who might have been satisfied if I had invented a pedigree, balked at paying the contracted price, though as a labor of love I had traced a splendid additional lineage in her case. Once a man, who was acting for another, suggested that I could get a fat fee by discovering a coat of arms for a woman. I just smiled and showed him the door. I have never been offered a bribe direct.

"The genealogist must be as exact as the lawyer. A careless investigator claimed to have identified, for a client, a Revolutionary fore-father who had a peculiar name. I went over the case and turned up eleven contemporaries who had that name in full. Several were related. Three lived in one Maryland town: a father, his son, and a young cousin. Both the younger owned estates much alike in legal description and in name. One was called Whisky and the other Whisky Alley. Only strict comparison and a knowledge of eighteenth century land laws uncovered the original mistake."

"When I copy a document, I follow the spelling and capitalization to the last dot. There's plenty of drudgery in standing on ladders and lifting those heavy old books around, but in order to be historical evidence a copy must be verbatim."

"A lawyer whose daughter engaged me insisted his family was



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

Scotch. I found it Dutch. He didn't put much stock in genealogists, but when he read my report, with arguments and quoted documents, he said, "I'm a lawyer; they have proved their case." Later, though, he got his wish: Scotch blood was found in another line.

"Sometimes Miss Washburn's work is a labor of love. There was Thor Longus, who was born nine hundred years ago. When William the Conqueror won England, Thor Longus retreated to Scotland and settled there. Who was his father? For many years antiquarians had rummaged in records to find out, but it was Miss Washburn who unearthed the secret. In making a study of the Crawford family—all the Crawfords come from one stem—she found a facsimile of a charter in mediaeval Latin. In it, Thor Longus gave land to a monastery, and stipulated that the monks pray for his beloved father, Leofwine.

"Miss Washburn publishes a poem now and then, and finds time to write and broadcast naval history. She is secretary of the National Historical Society. In 1913 thousands met her when she was one of the two historians officially present on Perry's victory ship, the 'Niagara,' when it made a centennial cruise on the Great Lakes. But genealogy leaves her little spare time.

"It's absorbing," she says. "It is history made vivid and interesting—reduced from generalities to the life of a specific individual."

More recent notices follow. Miss Dora Albert, in the *Brooklyn Eagle*, wrote:

#### "CLIMBING THE FAMILY TREE

"If There Were Any Robber Barons Among Your Ancestors  
Miss Mabel Washburn, President of National  
Historical Society, Will Find It Out.

"Has an expert ever traced your family tree? What did he discover about your ancestors? Do you claim descent from the crew that came over in the Mayflower? Or are your ancestors English, Scotch, Irish, German, Russian or Italian? Do you boast proudly of your descent from the robber barons of mediaeval times or does your ancestral line wind through obscure butchers and haberdashers, reaching sometimes a proud earl or baron and suddenly descending through the youngest son of a youngest son to the most humble of tradesmen?



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

"For twenty-two years Mabel Washburn, president of the National Historical Society and Managing Editor of *The Journal of American History* and *The Journal of American Genealogy*, has been tracing family trees. She has a staff of heraldic artists and a genealogical agent in London all engaged in assisting her in unearthing the secrets of long ago. Through her work she has discovered grim tragedies and gay comedies of love buried in the scented lavender of the past.

"On the other hand, some of the stories uncovered by the genealogist are sheer comedy. One woman, whom we will call Susan of Colonial times, had married twice, and her second husband must often have heard from her of the virtues of the first. Evidently he tired of having the model husband thrown up to him, for in his will he added the following note to the bequest made to his wife: 'I hope Susan will be satisfied with what I am leaving her. At any rate, this is providing more for her than she had from her late husband.'

"Many of the Colonial wills, which Miss Washburn examines in order to find evidence of descent from early lines are touching. Furniture and bedding were hard to get in those days and valuable feather beds were handed down from generation to generation. Many of the wills show the thoughtfulness of a dying man for his mother, for they would bequeath to her money, corn, wool, land, part of the home and all of the bed—the bed was always mentioned 'the bedstead and all ye bed furniture.'

"One of the complications which the genealogist meets is the fact that orthography meant nothing to our Colonial ancestors. There are four or five spellings for almost every name, and the genealogist must be familiar with all of them. The name Woodhall is sometimes spelled Woodhull, sometimes Odell, Oddle or Udell. Who would think that from the aristocratic title Sevenoaks comes the most bourgeois name Snooks?

"What was your name at the beginning of the ancestral line? Pray do not judge by your present name, for strange are the changes which our surnames undergo. Once a woman who called herself Miss Johnston of New Jersey came to Miss Washburn to have her pedigree investigated.

"'Oh, that will be easy,' said Miss Washburn. 'I've done a great deal of work for the Scotch Johnstons of New Jersey.'



## IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

"But when she began to investigate the records she found not a single shred of evidence to establish any connection between this particular family and the Scotch Johnstons. There was, however, in that town in New Jersey a Dutch family by the name of Jansen, and Miss Washburn decided to investigate its pedigree. She soon found that her client, who was so proud of her Scotch descent, came from the Flemish family of Van Den Bosch.

"When the daughter reported the genealogist's findings to her father, a testy old lawyer, he pooh-poohed the idea. He was Scotch; Scotch he would remain.

"Well, why criticize Miss Washburn's report before you have read it?" asked his daughter.

"He took up the documents, almost as heavy as a book, containing quoted wills, marriage licenses, and other evidence, and after reading the whole thing through, he declared, 'I'm a lawyer; they have proved their case.'

"It seems strange that men and women should take their ancestral trees so seriously, but hundreds of thousands have their pedigrees traced each year and are filled with joy or sorrow according to the state of their family tree. One woman came to Miss Washburn in despair. 'Oh, I've always been so proud of my ancestors,' she said, 'and now I've discovered that my great-great-great-great-grandfather was a pirate.'

"Miss Washburn gravely explained that he was not a pirate but a privateer, who had been authorized by the government to seize shipping as a war measure against the English in the War of 1812.

"Another woman who had been proud of her ancestry bewailed the fact that she had a great-great-great-granduncle who had been irregular with Indian ladies.

"What do you do?" I asked Miss Washburn, 'when you discover these dark pages in family histories?'

"I mention them in my reports," she replied, 'but I do not stress them very much, for people take them far too seriously. In regard to these ancestral scandals I think of the lapse of years, and I find that time lends a mellowness to all that has occurred.'

"But what do you do if you find crime in an ancestral tree?"

"If you trace any ancestral tree back far enough you will come to the robber barons of mediaeval times, who committed every known



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

crime. But I rarely discover ancestral scandals of fairly recent date; and when I do they have often occurred not in a direct line with my client, but in a collateral line. Thus I was investigating the family tree of a young lieutenant and his father, a stately, elderly man. The records spoke proudly of a brother of one of their ancestors who had the doubtful distinction of being the first man executed in the county. Possibly this brother of an ancestor, who lived in the frontier Pennsylvania county, may have killed a man in a rough and tumble fight, so that there was not necessarily any disgrace attached to his execution. Still he was hardly an ancestor to whom one would point with pride.'

"What was Miss Washburn to do? Should she put this little hint of an ancestral scandal into her report? She hesitated and wondered what her duty was. Finally she spoke to the young lieutenant. He took the story of a crime in the family annals quite cheerfully, but decided that Miss Washburn had better omit it from her report, lest it distress his father.

"Another scandal which came to light in one of Miss Washburn's researches involved one of the proudest families in the United States and goes back to Colonial times. A highly educated, extremely wealthy man of middle age left a beautiful wife and four or five small children, ostensibly for a business trip to England, where he owned a large estate. Before leaving he went to a probate officer and made a will, in which he spoke of his wife and children by name, commended them for their beauty and faithfulness, made a Latin apostrophe to them, and provided for them bountifully.

"He stayed away for twenty years, and although there was no breath of scandal against his wife, he never returned to see his beautiful wife and his beautiful daughters, whom he had spoken of so touchingly in his will.

"Miss Washburn first entered genealogical work in 1906. Her favorite subject had always been history, and her ancestors on both sides had kept family records. One day she opened a newspaper casually at the place where the advertisements of different publishers appeared and discovered a notice of the genealogical department of a publishing house.

"That,' she said, 'is just the type of work I'd like to do.'

"The next day a slip of a girl just out of college gravely asked for the head of the genealogical department of a New York publishing



## IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

house. Frank Allaben extended his hand cordially, chatted with the young woman, found that he liked her, and decided that he needed an assistant. Later, he discovered that they were distant cousins.

"He took Miss Washburn under his tutelage and taught her how to trace family trees. In 1907 he left the publishing house and founded Frank Allaben Genealogical Company. Miss Washburn remained as his assistant, publishing genealogies, engaging in research work and acting as secretary and director of The National Historical Society.\* Upon the death of Mr. Allaben she became president of the Society, editor of its two publications, and entered into business for herself.

"Miss Washburn was the first person to put into print in one place the facts and proofs of the connection between the first Virginia ancestors of George Washington and the ancient Washington family in England, tracing the descent back as far as 1400. To the Washington coat of arms, she discovered, the American flag owes its origin."

The following was written in the *New York Evening Post*, by Miss Marion Clyde McCarroll, editor of the Woman's Page of that newspaper.

### "HAVE YOU ANY HEROES ON YOUR FAMILY TREE? HERE'S A WOMAN WHO KNOWS HOW TO FIND OUT

"Hunting up your family tree to see what nobles and heroes may be found dangling from its branches may seem like a snobbish sort of pursuit.

"But it isn't, declares Mabel Thacher Rosemary Washburn. It's the most natural interest in the world, she says, and the most stimulating.

"And even if you're a person who has always been perfectly content to let your sleeping ancestors lie, you can't help getting a bit excited about them after you've listened to Miss Washburn tell about the fun of finding out just who you are and what your forefathers were all doing three or four or five hundred years ago.

"I can't understand how there can be anybody who isn't interested in knowing about his family line," said Miss Washburn, who has

\* The chief founder, 1915, of The National Historical Society, was Frank Allaben, its President, thence, until his earthly life ended, in 1927. Mabel Washburn.



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

traced genealogies for thousands of people in the last twenty years, 'If you didn't know who your father and mother were, you'd be crazy to find out, wouldn't you? Well, it's just the same sort of feeling that makes people want to know who their great-great-grandparents were and on back to even more remote relatives.'

"Establishing one's relationship to those who were active in generations long past makes all of history a vivid and living thing," asserted this enthusiast, to whom unraveling the tangled skeins of family connections is an occupation more thrilling than any other.

"Suppose," she said, "you knew that originally your family came from a part of the world where important historical events had taken place. Then some of its members must have had some part in those events. And wouldn't it make those happenings much more real in your mind to know just who the ancestors were who had been active in them and just what part they had played?"

"Wouldn't it, too, be of interest to a person to discover that in addition to the English or French or German blood he may happen to know is in his veins, there is a strain of Spanish ancestry, or perhaps a line that has handed down to him something of the spirit of the Vikings?"

"It gives one just a little more courage to face life when it is hard, and makes one carry the head a little higher, to remember a specific person back in the family somewhere who has stood out in history for bravery in the face of danger, and achievement and endurance under hardships."

"Behind Miss Washburn's desk in her little office at the very top of the Flatiron Building hang a number of paintings of coats-of-arms, upon more than one of which she has a direct claim. For, through the ancestors who have been in America since 1620, she traces her family back to distinguished lines.

"It was because I was brought up with an interest in family history," she said, "that I finally found my way into genealogical research as a profession. All my family were interested in the subject, and it never occurred to me for a long time that everybody did not know about their ancestors as a matter of course."

"Then over twenty years ago when it became necessary for me to earn a living, I happened to see one day an advertisement of a publishing house which sold genealogical books. Before that, I hadn't known



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

that you could actually buy this type of books. With my natural interest in the subject, I decided to see if I could make a connection with that publishing house, and sure enough, a few months later there was an opening which was offered to me.

"Ever since then, I have continued in this work, and have found it the most fascinating imaginable. Even aside from the historical interest of the thing, there is something indescribably exciting in tracing a thread of family line back through the centuries to its source. And it isn't always an easy thing to do either. You have to be as persistent as a mosquito if you're going to be a genealogist, because time and again you're balked in your search and come to a place where all the clues seem to give out. Then you've got to keep on hunting until you find a fresh clue."

"From all over the country letters come to her asking her aid in searching out family histories, Miss Washburn said. Not only does she keep herself busy all the time, but she has to employ assistants as well to keep abreast of the work that comes to her desk."

Another article on the subject was written by Miss Dora Albert, this time in *The Christian Science Monitor*, of Boston.

#### "A GENEALOGIST WHO COMMENDS THE PROFESSION

"Twenty-two years ago an auburn-haired girl with gay, dancing brown eyes, whose ancestors on both sides had always kept family records, decided that above all other things she wanted to be a genealogist and trace the secret history of the past in the lives and pedigrees of individuals.

"The dream of the auburn-haired girl has been fulfilled. Ever since 1907 Mabel Washburn, president of the National Historical Society and managing editor of the *Journal of American History* and the *Journal of American Genealogy*, has been tracing family trees.

"How do you go about looking up the ancestry of a client?" I asked Miss Washburn.

"First, I question him to discover all that he knows about his parents and grandparents, their names, their place of birth, the dates on which they were married. Next, I go to old courthouses and



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

churches, get exact copies of marriage licenses, deeds, wills and land grants, examine town meeting records and inscriptions on old tombstones. Sometimes a yellow and faded family letter will help to establish the relationship of a client to some old family.

"The profession is an ideal one for a woman," declared Miss Washburn. "The genealogist who is past middle age is better equipped for her work than a younger woman with less experience."

"What are some of the qualifications of the successful genealogist?" I asked.

"A definite and thorough knowledge of history extending through American history of the Colonial period, through all of English history, a knowledge of German, Swiss and French history,—for many of our immigrants come from these countries,—a habit of accuracy, perseverance, and the legal instinct. It is absolutely necessary for a genealogist not to jump to conclusions, but to know the difference between evidence and circumstantial proof."

"The genealogist often faces peculiar problems. Miss Washburn once had to trace the ancestry of John Brown, who lived in a town in Virginia, in which were seemingly clustered all the John Browns in the United States. How to find out the right John Brown among all those others, many of whom were not related to the family at all?

"Thus, humor and puzzlements creep into the work of a genealogist; sometimes she is drawn by a false clue; sometimes she follows a line of ancestry into the secrets of the past. The noble deeds of the past, too, become illuminated for her, for she feels that she is one of the throng of men and women who crowd the pages of history. 'Genealogy,' says Miss Washburn, 'is history brought down to individuals. It is the most democratic and to me the most fascinating of social sciences.'"

The *New York American* recently published the following, written by Miss Amy Porter.

"Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief?

"Which are your great-grandfathers? And do you care? Almost everybody does care, and it's this interest in the lore of ancestry that has provided Mabel Washburn with her life work.

"Mabel Washburn is a little bit of a woman who has an office in



#### IF YOU CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGIST

the top of the Flatiron Building at Broadway and 23rd Street, where she spends her days clambering around in the remoter branches of family trees. Men and women write to her demanding to know who, when and where their forbears were, arrived, and came from, and Miss Washburn goes to her various sources of information and digs out the history necessary to furnish them with a complete report.

"Her clients are men and women in just about equal proportions, Miss Washburn said, but she explained that the men were usually impelled by a natural curiosity about their ancestry and a lively interest in history, while the women were more often moved by a desire to qualify themselves for admission to some social organization like the Colonial Dames or the Daughters of the American Revolution.

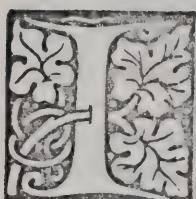
"Miss Washburn is president of The National Historical Society. She was the first authority to put into print\* the relationship between George Washington's family in Virginia and the great Washington family of England, from whose coat of arms the American Flag was derived."

---

\* My "Washington's Old World Ancestry," *The Journal of American History*, Volume VI, 1912, is believed the first publication of all the facts and proofs of this. Mabel Washburn.



## Your Own Book: Preparing and Publishing



If you plan to put in print the results of your research, you will probably have sought to gather the records of all descendants whom you could find of one original ancestor. This plan has been briefly touched upon, in this book's chapter, entitled "Compiling Your Records." Such a chronicle will usually begin with the first American ancestor of the surname. You can readily see that, in such a work, you will, probably, have gathered data on hundreds, or even thousands, of descendants. Some plan must be followed which will make it easy to trace the relationships of such a family, as these have been set forth in different parts of your book, so that, wherever in the volume one member's record appears, he or she may readily be "placed," when met again, under a preceding or a following generation. The best way to do this, it has been found, by long experience, is to adopt a system whereby persons are designated by numbers.

Many genealogies, in the past, have been published, which have followed what is known as the Tribal System,—a method, we believe, devised to drive readers of such books into fine frenzy. This plan is to describe the first ancestor of the family, who would be given the designating number, 1; to list all of his children; then to give the biography of his eldest child, before whose name the number, 2, would be placed. The next step in the Tribal System would be to give the biography of this Number 2's eldest child, designated as Number 3; continuing to follow one single lineage, through the eldest child of the eldest child, in each generation, until the present period. Each eldest child, in this long-drawn-out record, would be given the distinguishing number next in order to that of his father. You would then return to the second child of the original ancestor, and, in the same way, carry out to the bitter end the long lineage deriving from this second



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

child. Finally, you would have done this for all the myriad lineages whose records you had collected.

You would then find that nobody, except, perhaps, persons descending from one particular lineage in your vast collection (and probably not even such descendants, unless they had the patience of Job, and a good deal of technical knowledge about genealogy), could possibly follow the intricate maze which you had evolved.

If you, yourself, wished to find the biography of a special member of this "tribe," you would probably have to spend a long time doing so, and a longer time in learning that person's relationships to anyone else, except his direct forbears. Even his first cousins would be very hard to locate in your book.

The Tribal System genealogy, fortunately, is outmoded. Most first-class genealogies now given to the public in book-form follow the simple, easy-to-do, easily understood, and scientific method which has been sponsored by the authors of the present volume, standardized in the genealogies published by Frank Allaben Genealogical Company, and followed in the magazines of The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society and The New England Historical and Genealogical Society. This plan of arrangement will now be described, as the Allaben Method.

As in the Tribal System, the number, 1, will designate, in the Allaben Method, the first common ancestor of all the family, whose records you have traced. Suppose you have collected material on descendants of three of his five children: designating numbers would be given to these three children, where their names appear in the list of their father's children, under his biography. The two of his children, whose descendants you do not know,—or who, perhaps, died in infancy, or are known never to have married,—would receive no such distinguishing numbers when their names appeared in this list. The first child in the list who was to receive a distinguishing number (since you intended him to appear as the head of a family, in the next generation), would be Number 2. His brother, or sister, next to him in age, would be Number 3 in the said list of their father's children. The next brother, or sister, would be Number 4, and so on.

This plan of arranging a genealogy is based on the Generations of the family, as a whole, rather than on Tribes, or Branches. According to this method, Number 2, who was thus distinguished, when his



## YOUR OWN BOOK: PREPARING AND PUBLISHING

name appeared in the list of his father's children, will, under the division of your book, entitled "Second Generation," again be designated by the same number, 2, and, here, you will put the full biography of this Number 2. His biography, provided you know his children, will end with a list of these, and his children, also, must have distinguishing numbers placed before their names in this list.

Suppose, as has been suggested, for our illustration, Ancestor Number 1 had five children, three of whom are to appear as heads of families in the Second Generation, and who, thus, have been, as said, designated (in their list, under Number 1's biography), by the numbers 2, 3, and 4. In the Second Generation, when you give the list of children of Number 2, his eldest child would receive the number 5; this child's next eldest brother, or sister, would be Number 6; the next, 7; and so on. In the Third Generation, the first biography would be that of Number 5, who had thus been designated in the list of children ending the biography of his father, who was Number 2.

This method should be carried out through all the generations treated in your book. When the work has ended, you, or anyone else, can easily trace a direct lineage, and all related lines. For example, suppose a person reads in your book, half way through, perhaps, the biography of Weeden Witter. Weeden here appears as the head of a family, and, before his name, the reader will have noted his distinguishing number. Let us suppose this number is 80, and that Weeden's biography appears in the division of the book entitled "Seventh Generation." The reader will turn to the Sixth Generation and examine the lists of children appearing under the biographies of heads of families in the Sixth Generation. He will soon see the number, 80, followed by Weeden Witter's name merely (although, sometimes, a few items will appear after the names in their lists as children,—as, date of birth, perhaps, and, sometimes, name of husband or wife). Having located Weeden Witter as Number 80 in a list of children, it will be seen that his father was Weeden Witter, Senior, noted as Number 58. On turning to the Fifth Generation, and, in the same way, examining lists of children appearing under heads of families therein, this Weeden Witter, Number 58, will be found in the list of children of Lieutenant Josiah Witter, who is Number 26. In the Fourth Generation, this Josiah will be listed as Number 26, among the children of Joseph Witter, who is Number 10. Under the Third Generation, Number 10,



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

Joseph, is listed among the children of John Witter, Number 4. This last appears (with the same number, 4), as the son of a Josiah, under the Second Generation; Josiah, in First Generation, as the child of William Witter, original ancestor in America of the Witter family, and who has been designated as Number 1.

This Allaben Method, based on the generation idea, may, if this is the first time you have heard of it, seem complicated; but, if you will try it out yourself, with any family whose history you may now know, you will soon see that it is not complicated, but is very simple, and that you can soon follow the plan with ease.

Perhaps the little example, now to be given, may be of service, in suggesting how to arrange and number the described lists of ancestors' children, these lists, as said, to be given at ends of biographies of those ancestors who, in your book, appear as heads of families. The Arabic figures are used as designating numbers of those children (appearing in these lists), who, in the next generation of your book, will appear (with the same designating numbers), as heads of families. The small Roman numerals are to denote the order of births of the children in a list.

The children of John and Jane (Jones) Smith were:

- 15      i    Joseph Smith.
- 16      ii    Henry Smith.
- iii   James Smith; born at Albany, New York, March 29, 1800; died at Albany, April 4, 1800.
- 17      iv    Alice Smith.
- v    Edith Smith; born at Albany, New York, August 3, 1808; died at Bennington, Vermont, September 2, 1840; married Lawrence Ashley, but had no children.

It is usual to show the generation in which belongs the head of a family, when his biography is given, and to repeat, by name, the list of his ancestors, back to the common ancestor of the family treated in the genealogy. Figures, to denote generations-numbers, are placed after his name,—at the outset of his biography, only,—and, similarly, after the names of ancestors there appearing. All these figures should be placed a little above the line,—just as you placed your authority-numbers when you were writing the long pedigree proven from your records, as has



## YOUR OWN BOOK: PREPARING AND PUBLISHING

been described in the chapter, "Compiling Your Records." An example of the beginning of a biography, for the head of a family, follows.

16 HENRY<sup>5</sup> SMITH (John,<sup>4</sup> Thomas,<sup>3</sup> Benjamin,<sup>2</sup> James<sup>1</sup>) was born in Albany, New York, June 1, 1798, and was there baptized, in the First Presbyterian Church, June 9, 1798. He was educated in the Albany Academy, and, on graduation, entered the employ of a firm of cabinet-makers in Albany.

An account of the rest of Henry's career would follow, then his death, and record of his Will, if you had it. Next would come place and date of his marriage, name of his wife, places and dates of her birth and death, names of her parents, if known. After all these items, would appear the list of children, born of his marriage. It is better to repeat the surname after the names of children, because, in the case of descents on the distaff side of the house, the surnames would not be that of the main family of the book. Also, some children might have surnames for middle names, and these might be mistaken for their own surnames, if the latter were not uniformly given after all children's names as they appeared in lists at the close of their parents' biographies.

In the chapter of this book, called "Compiling Your Records," general directions have been given as to the preparation of your manuscript; and these directions would, for the most part, apply to the preparation of a manuscript which was to be printed. In the latter case, your history of the family must be typewritten,—preferably, before it goes to a publisher, for estimate of the costs of printing and publishing.

It is to be hoped that all compilers of family histories may, if it is possible, provide for these the permanency of print, and that the printing may result in a book, not alone for the pleasure of a few members of the family, but to be published, given to the world, made possible of purchase by all descendants of the ancestry which it describes, and to be preserved in public libraries throughout the country.

Because your study of a family has not reached the point of completion,—which point, as a matter of fact, is never reached, for no one could be sure that he had traced all the thousands of descendants of one ancestor, living, say, ten generations ago,—do not hesitate to print and publish the material which you have gathered. Every good published genealogy becomes a basis for future work on the same family; and



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

others, reading your book, may be able to amplify what you could ~~put~~ down only in part. Also, for yourself, if you plan to continue your labor of love in seeking further data on your ancestors, you will find that the clarity of print is a great help in consulting the records which you formerly collected. When you see your records, clearly arranged in the advised Allaben Method, printed on good paper, embellished, perhaps, with beautiful illustrations, bound in durable cloth, you will feel a new impetus to continue the work, and perhaps to issue a second volume on the family's history.

Sometimes, several members of a family, unknown to each other, have been working on some of its special branches; and, it may be, that each of these persons has met with genealogical problems which have proved insolvable to him. If one of these persons publishes the family history, as he has been able to work it out, the others may find, and often do, that he has solved their problems; while, in turn, the author, who published, may learn from those others the solution of difficulties which he was unable to conquer in his work. If all seekers after family records would only print and publish what they have been able to gather, many would discover the complements of their work in the work of others, and all could then go forward in the task of preparing and publishing more extensive histories of their families.

There is a great deal of pleasure, too, in seeing our work in black-and-white on the pages of a printed book, well-bound, appropriately illustrated, and one which we know is going to be read by thousands, in homes and in libraries.

It is by no means easy to print a genealogy. The nature of the work requires extreme carefulness as to following of "copy." If you give your manuscript to a printer who is not familiar with the work of printing genealogies, he will undoubtedly make errors as to typographical arrangement of your material, even if his composition proves to be absolutely accurate in reproducing your dates and names, and all of your manuscript. Therefore, it is strongly advised that, instead of putting your manuscript in the hands of a printer, you place it in care of a publisher, and let the publisher be responsible for the work of printing, and, also, for the binding, the engraving of illustrations, proof-reading, and indexing. The last, an important part of nearly any book, is indispensable for a genealogy; yet many genealogies are put forth, whose indexes are incomplete, poorly arranged, and which



## YOUR OWN BOOK: PREPARING AND PUBLISHING

might as well be omitted entirely, for all the service they render the reader.

Choose, for your publisher, an individual, or a firm or organization, specimens of whose book-making display taste and enthusiasm, unwillingness to resort to cheap materials, poor type, unconscientious labor, in order to gain wider margin of profit on the contracts made. Above all, select a publisher used to genealogical work. Only thus can you secure the facilities and the experience which your book deserves. A genealogical manuscript in the hands of a publisher untrained to this distinctly specialized kind of book often results in a volume, inaccurate in matter, not uniform in style, and with an unmistakably amateurish touch everywhere evident.

Neither will most publishers, unaccustomed to issuance of genealogies, have practical knowledge of how to market them. They may not be conversant with the libraries, throughout the country, which have genealogical departments or, at least, buy genealogical books to a considerable extent.

Of course, any first-class publisher will endeavor to have the proof-reading of his books done with care and intelligence; but to proof-read a genealogical manuscript, with its myriad names and dates, its number-system, and technical plan of arrangement, with a thousand other details needing expert, informed attention, would be a task beyond the scope of many proof-readers. You will probably, and properly, wish to read your own proofs, while a duplicate of them is being read by the publisher's reader; and, at the printer's, another reader, also, will go carefully over them, to make sure that your copy has been followed with accuracy. Thus, in most cases, three persons will have read your proofs, before the book goes to press. The proverb, that "Too many cooks spoil the broth," does not hold good as to proof-reading. It is a peculiar fact that mistakes which have been passed over by one pair of eyes are likely to escape their notice even on a second or further reading. But the fresh eyes of an expert proof-reader, conversant with genealogical manuscripts, will detect such mistakes, and the author will, many times, also be indebted to the experienced proof-reader for his queries, noted on the proofs' margins, calling attention to doubtful points, in the manuscript, for the author's reconsideration.

There will be, however, far fewer such doubtful points, if your



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

arrangement with the publisher has included an expert editorial reading of your manuscript, before the latter was sent to the printer. Such editorial reading will note any typographical errors in your manuscript; will see that your punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, and orthography are correct and uniform in style; and will submit to you for decision any apparent mistakes in your manuscript as to dates or other genealogical items.

The paper for a genealogy need not be expensive, but it must be clear and durable. The binding should be in substantial Buckram cloth, if it is not to receive the luxury of more beautiful,—and even more lasting,—Morocco leather. A published genealogy is going to be read for many years,—perhaps for many generations. It is going to be handled for long periods at a time by persons consulting it in libraries. Above all, its materials must be strong and enduring, and its workmanship of the best. These are essentials, whether you can afford to introduce your brain-child to the world in a *robe de luxe*, or whether meticulous economy must be observed in providing its raiment. Naturally, you will wish your genealogy to appear in the most attractive dress which you can afford; and you will certainly feel that you can *not* afford anything which would give to your book an unscholarly or unsightly aspect.

When the first copy of your book has been delivered to you, crisp and fresh, what a delight to your heart it will be, what a feast to your eyes! Of course, if it is your first book, there will be the wild thrill that goes with all joyous first experiences; but much of this delicious, Springtime feeling will return, when,—having launched this first tribute to the men and women whose blood beats in your own breast, whose dreams and achievements are the heritage of your own personality,—you see, again, the blossoming of your work in a second, or third volume, each containing the further records which your continued researches have been able to secure, and, thus, festooning with fresh garlands your shrine of ancestral remembrance.

The history of a family is part of the nation's history. The author of a genealogy is, in very truth, an historian. Think of this, when you look upon *your own book!* It has been built, little by little, through your ardent perseverance in gathering records, or through your generous provision for their gathering by others. Form and harmony of line have come to it, by your scholarly care for its arrangement. You



#### YOUR OWN BOOK: PREPARING AND PUBLISHING

have made possible its embellishment with fair paper and clear type, with finely engraved portraits and pictures of ancestral scenes,—perhaps with exquisite emblazonry in colors of the Coat-Armor borne by your ancestors in battle and on Crusade. It is arrayed in soft-hued, or richly dark, cloth, woven to endure; or it may lie fragrant in Morocco. *Your own book* has been given to the world! Your work, the story of your own ancestors, has become part of our national archives, a splendid chronicle of America's past, to inspire America's present to achieve America's future!



## Coats-of-Arms



CAPTAIN of the Revolution, who equipped and led his Company of men at the Battles of Lexington and Concord, wrote in his Diary, after the War: "This day in Boston I saw the coat of arms which our ancestors brought from Old England to New England. It is a rose surrounded by martlet-birds." Unfortunately, the Captain failed to mention where, in Boston, he saw his Arms, and one of his descendants, at least, has often wondered if this representation of her ancestors' Armorial Bearings was still in existence. She knows that Captain Seth's description was more or less accurate, for his and her ancestors bore a silver shield, on which, between six scarlet martlets, is a scarlet band; and, thereon, three silver cinque-foils, which are heraldic roses.

There may be a similar record in your own family. Perhaps you have some ancient calf-bound volume in your family library, handed down through generations, and, on whose inside cover appears a delicate engraving of your ancestral Coat-Armor, with, beneath this, the name of your scholarly ancestor who placed his heraldic book-plate in the volume. You may have gazed upon the Armorial emblazonry of your family, carved on an ancestral grave-stone in some old church-yard, or, it may be, in what was, long ago, a family cemetery, now covered with the long grass of an abandoned farm. In your own home, from childhood, you may have seen a painting of your Coat-of-Arms, and have heard stories of its being borne in battle by your ancestors, or adorning their great halls in Old World manor-houses; thence brought into the New World's wilderness by your own ancestor.

It is a common delusion that very few of our Colonists had the right to Coat-Armor, and that still fewer availed themselves of such right. On the contrary, a study of the surnames of our Colonists reveals the fact that many of these are of Armigerous families,—names derived from places, for example, in England, which, it is known, became surnames through ancestral ownership of such places. Of course, families with surnames of other derivation often have a right to Coat-Armor; but, in these cases, it is not so easy to be sure that a family of



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

the name has right to the Arms borne by another family of the same surname. To prove a family's right to Arms,—or to disprove it,—usually requires research, just as such work is required to trace the pedigree of a family's generations.

Heraldic insignia, as actually depicted on shields in battle, or used for family devices, or graved on royal seals, go back to remote periods in human history. The Sacred Scriptures give us some instances, and of others we have learned through the excavations of modern archaeologists. Herodotus says that the Carians were the first people to paint their war-shields. The idea of a family Coat-of-Arms may derive from the Totem-idea, that a human family has mysterious kinship with some class in the lower creation, as birds, animals, or creatures of the sea. Among some peoples, to-day, the heraldic device of a family is not a painting on a shield, or a reproduction of such, but is a certain object. A gentleman of Japan, on diplomatic service in America, told the present writer that what, in his family, corresponded to a Coat-of-Arms was a snowy plume, and he showed this, exquisitely fashioned of white silk.

The use of Coat-Armor, in the sense of European and American usage, however, originated, there seems no doubt, between the First and Second Crusades, and was brought about for a very practical reason. In those days, there existed no national armies, on our modern basis; but the nobles and gentlemen who led their feudal followers, or who engaged professional fighting-men, for campaigns to free the Holy Land from the Infidel, formed, thus, their own, personal military bands. These could not march under, or, in battle, rally round a national flag, for the nearest approach then to a national flag was the banner of a nation's king. In the hurly-burly of hand-to-hand fighting of the Middle Ages, it was necessary to devise some sure way whereby the soldiers of one band could instantly recognize their fellows, and know, at a glance, their leader, in order to follow him in battle, or to protect him in peril from the enemy. It is believed, and appears certainly true, that our ancestral Coats-of-Arms came into use to serve these needs.

Romantic tales are told and written of Arms granted on the Field of Hastings by William the Conqueror; but no slightest foundation for such stories has ever been found. As a matter of fact, Arms were not "granted" at all in the early period of their historic usage. As the



## COATS-OF-ARMS

centuries rolled on, the recording of Arms, oversight of the bearing of existant Arms by those families only whose ancestors had borne them, and settlement of disputes arising from such matters, brought into being official Heralds' Offices, or Colleges of Arms. Then, descendants of Cadet branches of great families began to seek official confirmation of their right to bear their ancestral Arms. New families became eminent, and, unable to claim hereditary Coat-Armor, applied for grants of Arms, to be borne by themselves and their descendants. Similar practices are going on at the present time, under Arms-granting governments.

The most authoritative presentation of the subject of early Arms-bearing in the England that is ancestral home to most Americans appeared in *The Journal of American History*, Volume XII, Number 2, 1918, and extracts from this follow here.\*

"Many Americans have confused notions concerning the Coats-of-Arms of the old baronial families of England. . . . . One of the most common errors is the belief that Coats-of-Arms were used much earlier than was the fact. It is often assumed that the companions of the Conqueror entered England with Armorial devices upon their shields and banners. But not a single instance is known of the use of Coat-Armor at that early date. Even as late as the time of making the Bayeux Tapestry, with its wonderful pictorial record of the events of the Conquest, we find no Armorial devices on any of the shields. Another mistake is the assumption that Coat-Armor was in vogue at least as early as the First Crusade. But the evidence refutes this notion. Anna Commena, daughter of Alexius I, Emperor of the East, has left us a detailed account of the Crusader hosts that arrived at Constantinople, and she expressly states that the knights' shields were plain metal.

"The earliest known use of Armorial bearings occurs about thirty years after the First Crusade; the earliest instances in Great Britain, so far as yet known, being the de Clare Arms, between 1138 and 1148, upon the seals of the first 'Strongbow' and his nephew, the Earl of

\* This was written by Frank Allaben, in his masterly study, entitled "Green of Greens-Norton," which was, in effect, a continuation of his splendid "American Cousinships in British Blood." The latter had appeared in the preceding issue of *The Journal*,—a special Great Britain Number, for which we had the very kind and helpful co-operation of His Excellency, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, then British Ambassador to the United States. It may be of interest to note, in this connection, that, during the World War period, The National Historical Society published also special Numbers devoted to our other Allies, France and Italy, receiving, for these issues, similar valuable and highly valued co-operation from Their Excellencies, Ambassador Jusserand and Count Macchi di Celere. Mabel Washburn.



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

Hertford. . . . . We have no evidence of the use of Armorial bearings by the kings of England until they were employed on the seal of Richard I in 1189; but on the tomb of his grandfather, Geoffrey of Anjou, who died in 1151, an ancient shield of Arms was found, six leopards, . . . . . The liberty of that day in dealing with one's Coat-of-Arms is seen in the fact that Geoffrey's descendants, the Plantagenet kings of England, reduced the number of leopards to three, some of the earlier kings using only two. These leopards were subsequently corrupted into lions.

"A very curious example of the early arbitrariness in changing the family Arms is found in the entirely different Coats-of-Arms on the seals of the two de Quincy's Seiher and Roger, father and son. Both were great magnates, Earls of Winchester, and I have seen no satisfying explanation of the fact that Roger de Quincy substituted entirely different Arms for those which his father had used. Is it possible that Roger's Armorial bearings were those of his wife's father, Alan of Galloway? Another striking feature of Roger de Quincy's Arms is the appearance on his seal before 1250 of a Crest, the wyvern, or its earliest prototype, the wyver. This is almost, if not quite, the first use of a Crest in England, so far as we know.

"Another instance of substitution of Armorial bearings upon marriage with an heiress is the case of Hamelin Plantagenet, who married the Warenne heiress and became Earl of Surrey. He at first used the Arms of his own family, but soon adopted those of his wife, whose surname was also taken by his and her descendants. The Talbots of Goodrich Castle afford another case. After the Talbot marriage with Julian, daughter and heiress of Rheeze ap Griffith, Prince of South Wales, her Talbot descendants substituted the royal lion of South Wales for the old Talbot Arms, bendy of ten, argent and gules.

".....

"The carving of the Arms of Geoffrey de Mandeville on his tomb in the Temple Church has sometimes been cited as the earliest authentic instance of the use of Arms in Great Britain. The Clare seals would probably take precedence in point of time, however, even if Geoffrey de Mandeville's tomb was built and received its Armorial device immediately after his death. But precisely when these Arms were engraved upon this sepulchre we are unable to say. The general



## COATS-OF-ARMS

style would seem to indicate very early workmanship and undoubtedly Geoffrey's tomb can be cited as the first known instance of the use of Armorial devices in sepulchral decoration in England.

"An interesting deduction concerning early usage in adopting Coats-of-Arms has been attempted by Round and W. S. Ellis ('Antiquities of Heraldry') by comparing the similar Arms used by the Barons de Say, the Beauchamps of Bedford, the Claverings, and the de Veres, Earls of Oxford. The de Says descended from Beatrice de Mandeville, and at the time of the earliest recorded blazons of English Arms, in the reign of King Henry III, the Arms used by the de Says were quarterly, or and gules. At the same time, the Beauchamps of Bedford, descended from Rohese de Vere, widow of Geoffrey de Mandeville, by her second husband, Payn de Beauchamp, were using quarterly, or and gules, a bend. The Claverings, descended from Alice de Vere, sister of Rohese, used quarterly, or and gules, a bend sable. Finally, the de Veres, Earls of Oxford, were using quarterly, gules and or, a mullet argent in the first quarter.

"It is manifest that these different Coats-of-Arms are closely assimilated to one another, and when it is seen that the families using these Arms became related by blood or marriage at about the time that Coat-Armor began to be adopted in England, it becomes evident that, in all probability, their choice of similar Arms grew out of their genealogical connection with one another.

"On this basis, Mr. Ellis argues that all the Coats-of-Arms have been derived from one prototype, which he thinks was the Arms of the de Veres, which must have been used by Aubrey de Vere, great Chamberlain, who died in 1141 and was the father of the first Earl of Oxford and of the two daughters who intermarried with Beauchamp and Clavering respectively. Thus he gets an argument for an earlier use of Arms in England than any other known evidence seems to indicate.

"Round, on the other hand, rather justly argues that on scientific grounds we must assume that the more complex Arms are derived from the simpler ones. As the de Says are found using the simplest Arms, and were directly descended from the de Mandevilles, but not from the de Veres, Round contends that all of the Arms mentioned must have been derived from de Mandeville Arms as the common original, and not from de Vere Arms. He strengthens this



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

argument by pointing out that Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, was a much more conspicuous figure than his brother-in-law, the first Earl of Oxford. Round might have added, almost conclusively, that as the de Veres maintained their line with male heirs no one was likely to appropriate their Arms, whereas the failure of male heirs in the Mandeville line (with one exception who was outlawed) at the very time in question is precisely what permitted the de Mandeville connections to appropriate the Mandeville Arms, then about to lapse into disuse.

"A further powerful argument in Round's favor is the fact that Geoffrey FitzPiers, great-grandson of William de Say and Beatrice de Mandeville, himself assumed the surname of de Mandeville and became Earl of Essex. Would he not with the name also assume the Mandeville Arms? But he used the same Arms as the de Says, as we see from the first recorded blazons. Were not, then, the de Say Arms the original Mandeville Arms? In other words, FitzPiers' de Say ancestors had handed down to him the de Mandeville Arms which they had adopted as their own following the de Say marriage with Beatrice de Mandeville.

"Thus we have evidence of the way in which Arms were sometimes assumed, and varied, among related baronial families in the early beginnings of the use of Coat-Armor. The de Says adopted the Arms of the great heiress of the de Mandevilles, from whom they descended. Very likely the de Says had never adopted Arms of their own before this time, and the same was probably true of the Beau-champs, Claverings, and de Veres. We need not wonder at such an adoption of the Arms of a great family with which they were connected by those who were choosing Arms for the first time; for during the centuries which followed, down to a comparatively recent period, we find families with Arms of their own frequently substituting for these the Arms of more prominent families to whose inheritances they had succeeded by marriages with heiresses. This substitution of Arms was not done away with until the practice of marshalling Arms by quartering became general in England, following the fashion set by Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I. By permanently quartering with one's paternal Arms the Arms of the families of heiresses with whom there was marriage, the honor of such alliances could be displayed without giving up one's original Coat.



## COATS-OF-ARMS

"In the early period, when Arms were being assumed by the barons and other freemen of England, other groups of related families may have appropriated a common Coat-of-Arms as the de Says, Beau-champs, Claverings, and de Veres did. These cases, if investigated with critical caution, may help the genealogist to solve problems of early relationship that otherwise seem hopeless. We find such early variations of one prototype in the different Coats-of-Arms used by the branches budded off from the great house of Beauchamp, Earls of Warwick; and it is even likely that some other families that have used a variation of the Beauchamp Arms from the earliest times,—like the Washburns, for example,—may prove to be Beauchamps who changed their surnames with their estates. But deductions of this kind must be made with the greatest care, subject to verification by other corroborative indications; for in those early days the adoption of Arms was an arbitrary process, unguided by regulation, and un-hedged by precedent. Men followed their own notions. It is centuries later before we find appeals to courts of chivalry, revealing the beginnings of a tendency to question one's right to use any Arms he might please. Even in these disputes over Arms, one's right to choose his own Armorial bearings was not questioned, provided that he did not select the exact Arms with which some other family had identified itself by long usage.

"The attempt to regulate the use of Arms by means of heralds appointed by the King and incorporated into a college was a late device to squeeze money out of the people by creating a heraldic monopoly. The whole idea was decadent, and this attempt at regulation, instead of bringing order out of confusion, added greatly to the chaos and led to innumerable heraldic blunders which are so many pitfalls for the unwary genealogist. New Arms were granted for fees to persons whose ancestors had used other Arms for generations. Such cases are very numerous, and the herald who made the grant or confirmation sometimes placed on record his confession that older Arms had been in use.

"The doctrine taught by Fox-Davies some years back, that Armorial bearings are not used lawfully unless the Heralds' College at London contains a record either of their grant or confirmation, is a bit of humbug. This folly has been thoroughly exposed by Mr. J. H. Round, Mr. Oswald Barron, and other competent British authori-



## HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

ties, who are historians as well as genealogists. The most ancient and most interesting Coats-of-Arms are precisely those with the adoption of which the College of Arms has had nothing to do."

From the foregoing, it has been seen that the origin of Crests, in England, was not far from the middle of the Thirteenth Century,—approximately a century after Coat-Armor began to be used. Many persons mistake the word, Crest, as synonymous with Coat-of-Arms. The Crest is the device which, in some Coats, is placed over the shield. After its introduction, it was added to many existing Coats; and Arms assumed, or granted, since, nearly all have Crests. Some, however, of the old families were scornful of this new-fangled ornament, and expressions of their feelings on the subject have come down to us, almost as modernistic as that argument so often advanced against other innovations: "What was good enough for my grandfather is good enough for me!"

Who, in America, has the right to bear Arms? Anyone who can prove that his or her ancestors, in the family of the surname, had that right, prior to America's independence. A married woman, however, uses her husband's Arms. If her father had right to Arms, and if she was an "heiress,"—that is, having no brothers with children,—her father's Arms may be shown, as quarterings, on her husband's Arms, by their children, and these children's descendants. If she and her husband so choose, her paternal Arms may be impaled on his shield: the shield divided, vertically, with his Coat on the dexter side, and hers on the sinister side. These right and left sides of the shield are reversed as one looks at it.

What has just been said about the condition of heiresship, for the transmission of quarterings, applies to families of British origin. Rules for Continental heraldry are different, which accounts for the gorgeous emblazonry, with sixteen or more quarterings, sometimes found on the Continent. Many English families, however, even with the stricter rule on quarterings, may, lawfully, commemorate, thus, their descents from many Armigerous lines; but, usually, they are content with such use of only a few quarterings, or with none.

The Crest is distinctly a masculine ornament,—as borne in battle on a man's helmet. It is not supposed to be used on Arms as borne by a woman; but this rule is seldom observed in America. An un-



#### COATS-OF-ARMS

married woman uses her father's Arms, on a lozenge (diamond-shaped), rather than on a shield.

If the Arms are of British derivation, the helmet, over the shield (resting on a torse, or wreath, alternating the chief color and metal of the Coat), should be an Esquire's helmet,—in profile, with visor closed. Such a helmet, in British heraldry, belongs to an untitled Armigerous family; and we, in America, use no titles. The Mantling, or Lambrequin, surrounding the shield, should be of the chief color and metal of the Arms. It represents the knight's mantle, falling from his helmet, and slashed in battle. In Continental Arms, while this rule applies unless otherwise specified in the blazon (description of the Arms, in heraldic terminology), other colors or metals are often directed for the Mantling. The British rule for helmets, also, is different on the Continent. American families should bear their Arms in accordance with the usage of those countries whence their ancestors came to America.

Of course, the rule of bearing the Arms only of one's surname (or, for a married woman, her husband's Arms), does not apply in the case of decorative use of Arms,—as, paintings, rings, book-plates. For such, it is correct to use Arms of any Armigerous family from which you can prove your descent. On your letter-paper, however, your automobile or carriage, the stone or iron-grilled gateway into your estate, over your family hearthstone, and on your furniture and household linen, the Arms of your surname (your husband's or your father's, if a woman, as above mentioned), only should be used.

Let it be distinctly understood that bearing of Coat-Armor is *not* un-American. Many of our ancestors, in this country, used Arms as freely as had their ancestors in the Old World. Washington, and many other Fathers of the nation, bore their family Arms as a matter of course. It is believed, and appears to be true, that our American Flag,—the "Stars and Stripes,"—was based on the Washington Arms, which have the equivalents of these designs, heraldic mullets and bars. The United States Government has a Coat-of-Arms, and so have the States of our Union. Many American cities use heraldic insignia, as do American colleges and universities.

If all the lineages of American families were thoroughly traced, it would be found that all went back to Arms-bearing ancestry. You have four grand-parents, each of whom also had four. As has been



#### HOW TO TRACE AND RECORD YOUR OWN ANCESTRY

said, earlier in the present book, the number of one's ancestors, in the course of a thousand years, becomes myriad. In a small country,—England, for example,—all the population of a thousand years ago (king, noble, commoner, serf), must, with scarcely an exception, have poured its blood into those criss-crossed streams of the ancestry of each one of us whose forbears came from that land to found America.

The Arms borne by our ancestors in battle, dearly familiar to them in their homes, symbols of valor and leadership, should be reminders of our heritage from the past, spurs to courage in our own difficult present, banners of hope for the future of a nation carved from the wilderness and won to freedom by men and women with the blood of knights and Crusaders.

6203 1











